

#52

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# RAZZORCAKE

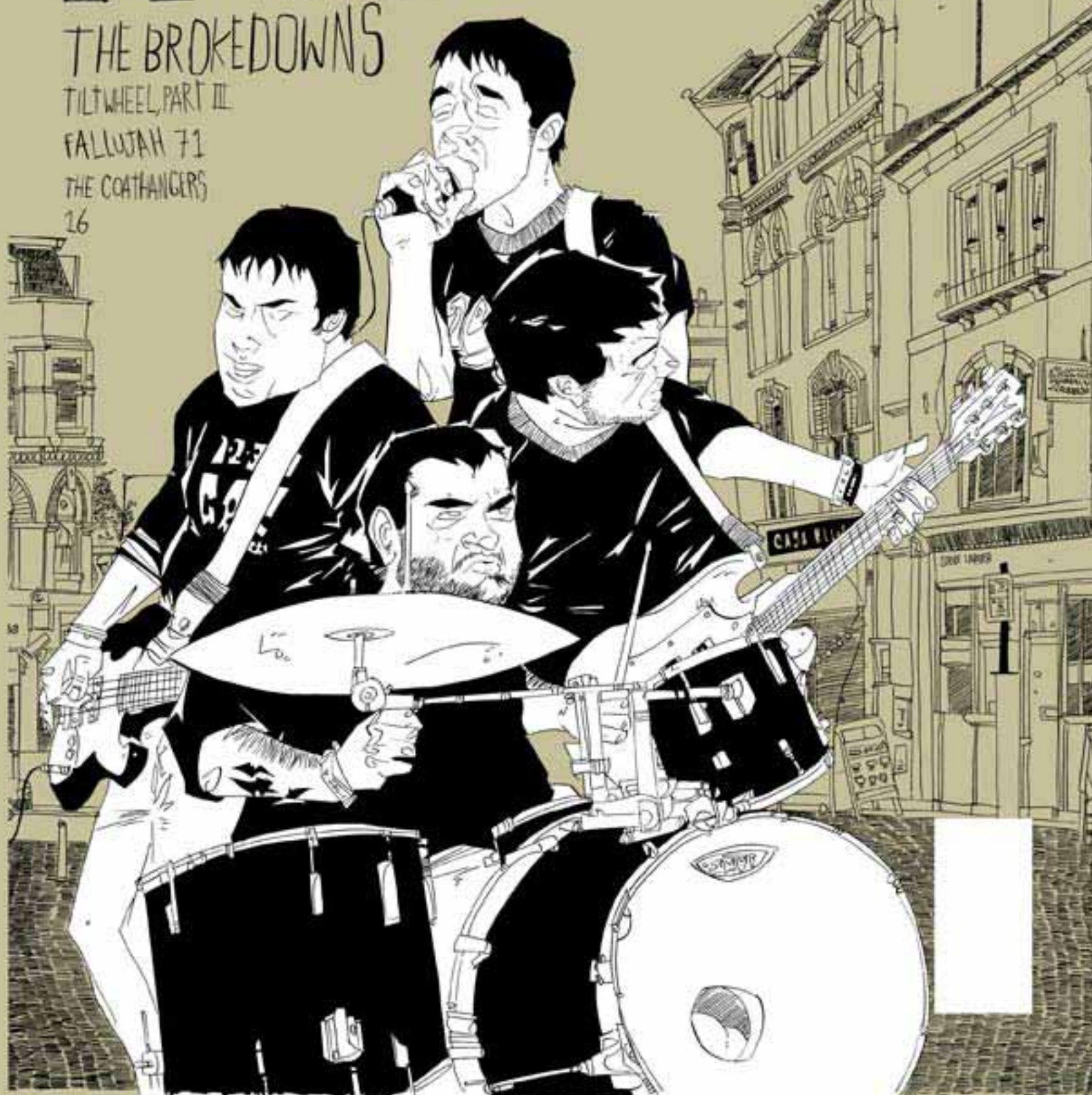
THE BROKEDOWNS

TILT WHEEL PART III

FALLUJAH 71

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# RIP THIS PAGE OUT

*Razorcake* is a bonafide non-profit music magazine dedicated to supporting independent music culture. All donations, subscriptions, and orders directly from us—regardless of amount—have been essential components to our continued survival.

Thanks to the generous and talented help of Matt Braun, Razorcake/Gorsky Press rolled up its sleeves and applied for two grants in the past several months. These are neither simple nor quick affairs. Honestly, they're grueling and force us to look at Razorcake in a much different light: statistics, financial statements, and ethnicity. As editor of these ongoing shenanigans that celebrate a person in a bunny head playing drums on lakes in upstate Wisconsin, I have a simpler view of ourselves that doesn't include website hit stats or print run numbers: "Are we treating people how we want to be treated? Are we doing our best? Is what we're making *good*?"

Yet, there's a strange satisfaction in putting together a narrative for the Department of Justice, who is administering grants as part of a settlement from an unnamed major music distributor who lost a lawsuit for the price fixing of CDs. If Razorcake can convince them that we're the folks who can turn an abusive practice of a large corporation into a free show celebrating independent music made in California, then it's worth the effort. Even if we don't get the grant, we know we gave it one hell of a shot, that we didn't just concede to our "fate" because the economy's the roughest it's been since we started the zine.

Razorcake has never had an easy go. We've never been a best seller, but we are one of the few internationally distributed voices for DIY punk music left America, and we're going to continue doing the best we can.

If you would like to give Razorcake some longer-term, hands-on assistance, we're looking for volunteers in the following areas: non-profit grant writer, non-profit fundraiser, FileMaker Pro wizard, PC network specialist, and website coder (PHP-Nuke and Zen Cart). If you live in the L.A. area, and aren't a jerk, we could always use a helping hand. Our door is open.

Contact us via [www.razorcake.org](http://www.razorcake.org) if you'd like to help out.

Thank you.

—Todd Taylor

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# RAZORCAKE

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The Blind Shake



The Rough Kids

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The Shitty Limits

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The Blind Shake



Logic Problem



Wet Reckless



The Shitty Limits



## A Feast of Scraps

On the surface, Los Angeles is a city with endless possibilities, yet independent music's always dealing with limited options. L.A. is a city of paradoxes. The metropolitan area is scratching a population of thirteen million, yet all ages venues are a rarity and have a high mortality rate. L.A. can be an intimidating beast of a town; a molten and constantly smoldering life-sized circuit board of bad vibes, shit traffic, and colossal indifference. It's no surprise that what could be endless real estate possibilities for shows—due to the fact that L.A.'s public transit system was dismantled in the 1940s and redesigned with intentional sprawl as its objective—mostly turn out to be dead ends. Cops and permits. Paperwork and lawsuits. We've got five hundred square miles to work with, yet most attempts at putting in the footing for a DIY punk venue feels like standing in a rain storm of hammers. It makes one feel like a character in Dostoyevsky's *The Insulted and Humiliated*. If you get used to the suffering and that your ideals are actively attempted to be stripped off of you, L.A.'s quite a pleasant place to live.

In the following respect, I'm a romantic. I think that without music being made and celebrated by human beings, we lose a bit of our souls. We may fundamentally disagree on styles of music and bands, but I do know this: if we leave music solely in the hands of machines, bureaucrats, and multi-national corporations, we all lose. I also think that "the music industry"—from major labels to conglomerate ticket resellers to corporate venues—is, largely, a travesty because if it worked as promised, all of your friends who are hard-working musicians would be paid and treated as well as union dry wallers or plumbers. They're not.

Years ago, directly to the South of us in Long Beach, was a thriving warehouse that threw all-ages shows. It was in the middle of an industrial

district. Thrown bottles couldn't hurt real estate. It was great fun. It was out of the way. No neighbors were being disturbed. Not only did the warehouse get shut down—during a particularly not-rowdy set in the middle of the day—each member who lived in that warehouse and helped run it was individually charged, sued, and warned that their fines and charges would be increased if they ever threw a show in Long Beach again.

Law enforcement has figured out that at the core of any scene is a small knot of people who actually get something done. With them effectively neutralized, a reliable, fair, and fun tour stop for local, national, and international bands was eradicated.

\* \* \*

What do people from the Shitty Limits (U.K.), Logic Problem (N.C.), Wet Reckless (L.A.), Rough Kids (L.A.), and one feral kitten have in common? A generator show in the armpit of the 5 and 110 freeways. At the end of a cul-de-sac, I recognized Ritchie of The Rough Kids and helped the band lift up and push their equipment through a freshly cut hole in the cyclone fence, where a pair of bolt cutters leaned. The brush along the side of the abandoned warehouse opened up into over two metric tons of vegetarian Chicharrón bags slashed open and spilling out. In the shadow of over an acre of concrete that used to be the foundation of a destroyed building, the bands round robinbed, playing three to four songs each in case the cops showed up, as trains on The Gold Line ran overhead. Each band was great. After the show, 7's in hand, I couldn't help but think, "Fuck you, L.A.... This is awesome."

—Todd Taylor

### AD / CONTRIBUTOR DEADLINES

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**"I could draw you a picture of the world and a screw/ I could alert you that your dreams are on fire."**

—The Reigning Sound, "Banker and a Liar," *Love and Curses*

This issue is dedicated to Marge and Tony Taylor's forty-fourth wedding anniversary.



**The PA was overpowered.**

**Kids scattered.**

**It was hot.**

**The Blind Shake ruled the Garvanza Skatepark, playing like there were a thousand screaming fans.**

**We salute you.**

**THANK YOU:** How rad would it be, walking down the street in London, and The Brokedowns were all in the middle of the street, cranking it out to pigeons thanks to Steve Larder for the cover illustration and design; Some of the best people watching in the world thanks to Craig Horky for his illo. in Liz's column; Dismemberment insurance thanks to Claire Cronin for her illo. in Jim's column; Two mint Oreos and two mugs of coffee thanks to Adrian Chi and her guest column; Smoke, bulge, and Zentai thanks to Ryan Gelatin for his illo. in Nab's column; Water fowl! thanks to Kevin Ruckus for his photo in the Chicken's column; Happy wedding time to Designated Dale and Yvonne; Lily Tomlin knows quite a bit about dicks thanks to Danny Martin for his illo. in Gary's column; Medieval PVC beat down thanks to Brad Beshaw for his illo. in Sean's column; A grown man—some have called a "musical genius" in a banana suit—thanks for the following for their help in the Tiltwheel Part III interview: Jeff Proctor, Shanty Cheryl, Jimmy Alvarado, Old HC Dude, and Lauren Measure; Dudes look rough, yet their music's even rougher thanks to Matt Average, Donothedead, and Jeff Fox for their help with the 16 interview; Huffing Glade and Albanian assassinations? Yep. Thanks to Megan Pants, Ian Floetl, Heather Ivanovich, and Katie Hovland for their help with The Brokedowns interview; I still wish they explained how they ended up in a little boy's bunk bed thanks to Chris Peigler and Lauren Measure for our pages? I sure hope not thanks to Lisa Weiss and Brendan W. Cosgrove for their help with the Fallujah 71 interview; Questionably talented coffee shop singer dude wrote a song called "Razorcake" that is not at all positive, as a result of one of our reviews. Dude doesn't realize he sent the CD to us... to review. Mission accomplished thanks to Jennifer Federico, Jessica T., Ty Stranglehold, Kurt Morris, Ryan Horky, Craven Rock, CT Terry, Lord Kveldulfr, Juan Espinosa, N.L. Dewart, Art Ettinger, Reyhan Ali, Matt Average, Donaramadingdong, Joe Evans III, Speedway Randy, Jimmy Alvarado, Vincent Battilana, Sarah Shay, Billups Allen, Dave Williams, Rene Navarro, Adrian Salas, Ryan Leach, Jake Shut, Samantha Beerhouse, Keith Rosson, Bryan Static, Sean Koepenick, Kristen K., Mike Frame, Andrew Flanagan, and Will Kwiatowski for your reviews; The following pruned the fuck out of this issue, thanks to Kari Hamanaka, Ever Velazquez, Juan Espinosa, Lisa Weiss, Jeff Proctor, Vincent, Samantha, N.L., and Adrian; A five hundred pound table and 120 degree thanks to Chris Baxter for his Photoshopped wizardry; Dropping off bundles and making distributor phone calls thanks to "Front Row" Joe Dana and N.L. "Todd Chandelier" Dewart; We've eclipsed updating our website over 19,000 times, mostly with individual reviews thanks to Kari Hamanaka, Nick Toerner, and Bryan Static; "Uhm, is there a 'honkey' checkbox in ethnicity for me?" thanks to Matt Braun for his grant writing help; Thanks to Matt Average for sittin' and sticking bulk labels; Thanks to Mary-Clare Stevens for executive decisions with clinical precision.



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Issue #52 October / November 2009

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**"The Orange Line is the worst good idea that ever happened in Los Angeles."**

# *My* No Drive Day

When I was twenty-one, I went to New York City. It was a marginally school-related excursion. I had gone with two others from our college radio station to attend the annual CMJ Music Conference, wherein we ditched most of the panels in favor of buying new 7" singles to play back in Los Angeles. On our first day in this city that none of us had ever visited before, we mastered the subway system. It was that easy.

For five days, we rode the subway everywhere, at all hours. With it was a sense of freedom I had never felt at home. We could hit club after club in one night, because we didn't have to pay for parking at every stop and never once had to worry about who was going to be the designated sucker. We didn't have to plan our days around transportation because the trains ran so frequently. When I came back to Los Angeles, I wanted nothing more than to liberate myself from the chains of the daily commute: the hours spent on freeways like the 405 and streets like La Brea, aimlessly flipping through crap radio stations while reaching for one more cigarette because there is nothing else to do; the constant, nagging fear that I will be late for everything because you never really know when and where traffic will hit. But, trying to make the switch to public transportation in L.A. is a nearly impossible task. Back in the late '90s, we barely had a rail system and even now with lines labeled Red, Orange, Purple, Green, Blue, and Gold, it's still flawed.

The problem with public transportation in L.A. is the city itself. In its earlier days, we, apparently, had one of the best transportation systems in the world. I've heard stories from my grandmother and her sisters about how they could just hop on a red car and go anywhere they wanted. But that all ended. The red cars somehow ended up in San Francisco and L.A. went to a driver-only freeway system. Then the city grew into a sprawling metropolis, with suburbs residing inside the city limits and no real means for getting people from Point A to Point B, save for the busses that sit in the same gridlock as everyone else. When subway and light

rail lines began to appear, it felt like a godsend, except that it wasn't. Lines remain in a state of limbo, thanks to various political arguments. Those that do exist only run until about eleven PM despite the fact that most of the Red Line stops are right in the midst of L.A.'s nightclub districts and last call is at two AM. Plus, more often than not, you will still have to catch a bus to get from a rail station to Point B.

If you have your own means to transport yourself across the city, you will avoid an L.A. bus at all cost. As I learned after my car was totaled years ago, busses rarely show up on time; sometimes they don't arrive at all. And unless you feel like repeatedly transferring lines, you might still have to walk two miles to get from the bus stop to your destination. Not exactly an ideal situation, especially when you have a sprained ankle and back spasms.

After the car accident situation, I now refuse to take a regular bus. But, on the rare occasion when I'm heading out to some location within walking distance from a Red Line station, I'll go the public transportation route, if for no other reason than to avoid traffic, ten dollar parking lot fees, and the parking tickets that keep popping up on my ride. So, when my friends asked if we could meet up for lunch four blocks from the Hollywood and Highland station, I grew excited. Yes, it's a no driving day.

The Orange Line is the worst good idea that ever happened in Los Angeles. It's an old, out-of-use railway reinvented to move people across the San Fernando Valley. The problem is that instead of going with the obvious choice of building a light rail system, the powers that be made it a busway. And, since said powers clearly didn't realize that people who live in the Valley don't necessarily like to drive, they didn't add enough busses to the system. Every six minutes or so, an Orange Line bus will arrive at your stop of choice. If it's rush hour, or you're near the end of the line, you might have to wait through a few busses until one with room arrives. The Orange Line is rarely empty. At around 11 PM, you can catch the last ride back from the

North Hollywood station and it will be full of people who cut out of parties early so as not to miss the bus. At noon, a time when you wouldn't think people would be doing much more than walking to the local sandwich shop for lunch, it's ridiculously crowded.

I caught the Orange Line in the midst of its route at just after noon and it was a simple matter of luck that there happened to be five or six seats left on the bus. Standing room only is okay for a subway car, sometimes, as there is more room, but inside a tiny bus, the last thing you want to do is stand. It's bad enough that everyone inside is already seated, cramped up against each other. Within two stops, the bus is packed to capacity and with each successive one, more and more people climb inside the vehicle. Few leave; no one seems to have a reason to exit before the end of the line. That points to the other major problem with the Orange Line: it doesn't really go anywhere outside of North Hollywood. Save for the Van Nuys and Sepulveda Blvd. stations, most of the outlets are in semi-residential areas. Unless you happen to be a resident, there's no reason to travel to White Oak or Laurel Canyon. The Orange Line exits are all a good two-mile walk from Ventura Boulevard, which hosts a major chunk of the office buildings, restaurants, and shops in the Valley.

That said, people only take the Orange Line as a means of crossing the Valley in order to leave the Valley, which, of course, is the dream of every young person who lives here. It's probably the reason why you'll see an abnormally large number of hipster young adults and teenage nu-ravers heading out on the busway.

The end of the busway is in a part of North Hollywood where there is virtually nothing, save for a post office and the end stop of the Red Line subway. The Red Line is, inevitably, the point of interest for everyone on the bus. As the bus makes its final stop, the crowd stands up at once. Half of the people on board sit down immediately afterwards, realizing that it will take another five minutes to squeeze out of the door. There's no exit plan for the bus and those sitting by the door





CRAIG HORKY

## During the summer, the Red Line becomes L.A.'s most underrated tourist attraction.

are almost always the last to leave, given the impossibility of trying to stand, let alone move, when there are fifty people trying to climb over your seat.

We cross the street en masse, a hundred or so people scurrying against the “Don’t Walk” sign, knowing that the next train through L.A. should leave right about now. We take the escalator, again en masse, because no one ever wants to deal with the steep staircase leading down to the top level of the subway station. There’s another flight of stairs, or escalator, after that, which drops us off at the train tracks. At 12:40 PM the station is far more desolate than what you might expect. The people who were once packed tightly into the bus are now scattered across the platform, silently waiting for the subway.

During the summer, the Red Line becomes L.A.’s most underrated tourist attraction. By our first stop, Universal City (home of Universal Studios, City Walk, and Gibson

Amphitheater) the subway is teeming with twenty-something-year-old backpackers. The travelers are mostly European, a fact one can discern by sight based on their penchant for wearing sneakers with no visible socks and H&M clothing. Once seated, the gabbing begins with French, Italian, and German layering on top of each other forming a gleeful, international cacophony. It’s a sound you never hear, a sight you never see, when traveling by car. This newfound knowledge that people head out to your city from across the world and seem excited to experience Los Angeles makes for a proud moment.

At Hollywood and Highland, my next exit and probably the biggest tourist trap in the city, I make my exit. The subway station is brimming with people who race to hop into a subway car. I’m pretty close to being late at this point, so I run up an escalator or two and step outside, where I’m greeted with an oppressive mix of heat, crowds, and young

guys trying to get me to take a bus tour of celebrity homes (“Do I look like a tourist?” is always my response). I run between people, past the street corner evangelists (“Sometimes we have to convert through fear, plagues, earthquakes. Whatever it takes to make sure you’re saved!”) and away from the madness of Hollywood and Highland. Slowly, the people begin to disappear and L.A. starts to take shape: the tattoo parlors and sex shops popping up in between storefronts filled with L.A. postcards and Michael Jackson T-shirts. I make my way down to Wilcox and fall inside the restaurant, a little winded, a little sweaty, and only five minutes late. My public transportation experiment took a little longer than anticipated, but cost a lot less, in terms of both cash and stress, than actually driving here. Seems like a success.

—Liz Ohanesian





# LAZY MICK

JIM RULAND

**“Trains are the reason why they offer dismemberment insurance.”**

## Coming 'Round the Bend

Imagine you are a passenger on a southbound train traveling approximately sixty miles per hour. You are drinking beer with a pair of Irish tourists. The train strikes a pedestrian standing on the tracks, killing him instantly. How many beers do you drink during the long delay caused by the death, and how badly do you feel about it afterwards?

\*

I went down to Hollywood Park to sit in the cheap seats and do my annual Charles Bukowski impersonation. I like going to the track on days when there are major meets elsewhere in the country because then all of the top-notch California jockeys get invited to ride. There are always a few riders left behind, and they have the upper hand over a field of back-up jockeys. The trick is to find one and stick with him while he goes up against inferior competition. It's not a foolproof system by any stretch of the imagination—it's not even a system—but it works.

My jockey was in the winner's circle more times than not, but I was getting greedy trying to hit a Daily Double. It's a sucker's bet that carries the promise of a huge payout. Even though I was picking lots of winners, I wasn't winning many bets.

That all changed after the Belmont Stakes. With a little help from an out-of-town handicapper (my brother in Idaho), we put together some bets. We didn't see how Aleet Alex, the favorite who had won the Preakness the week before and had come within a length of winning the Kentucky Derby back in May, could lose. Even though he was the favorite, we loaded up on him. We missed out on the exacta and the win ticket was predictably modest, but we had it so many times Aleet Alex still ended up paying a couple hundred bucks. My brother was pissed that we missed out on the exacta, but I was happy with my winnings and went to an Inglewood liquor store for a celebratory tall boy of Tecate and a six-pack for the road, or in this case, train.

\*

I am a hopeless romantic when it comes to the railroad. (Ah hell, when it comes to most things.) You would be, too, if you went to Union Station, the last of L.A.'s art deco landmarks, to pick up your sweetheart or take

the Surfliner to see her in San Diego every weekend for two years straight. The farewell kiss is the sweetest kind of sorrow, but a farewell kiss on a train station platform while the conductor calls “All aboard,” is like a scene out of a Jimmy Stewart movie.

My train that fateful Saturday had originated farther up the coast and was passing through L.A. so it was nearly packed. I joined two tourists sitting at the community table reserved for groups of three or more. It turns out they were Irish. I can't remember their names; let's call them Brendan and Brian. Out of politeness, I offered them each a Tecate from my cooler, which they accepted with great gratitude.

“Are ye allowed to drink on the train?” Brendan asked.

“You are indeed,” I said. “They sell beer and wine in the club car.”

“Do they now,” Brian said in that curious way the Irish have of phrasing statements as questions.

We clinked our cans together and took our medicine. I was in a particularly festive mood. I was newly engaged, had a few hundred bucks in my pocket, and was on my way to see my fiancé. When I ran out of Tecates, Brendan dispatched Brian to the club car for reinforcements. I guess you could say I was feeling lucky that the day belonged to me.

I was feeling so good about things I even tried to put money down on Kevin McBride, a gargantuan 6'6" Irish heavyweight who was fighting Mike Tyson in Washington, D.C. that evening. McBride hails from County Monaghan where he is known as “The Clones Colossus,” which sounds a lot better than the “Clones Tomato Can.” He was a stiff through and through with an utterly unimpressive record in the ring. Even though Tyson was near the end of his run, he was heavily favored over McBride. No one, including the two Irishmen I was traveling with, thought he had a chance.

But I was undeterred. Clones is the home of one of my favorite boxers, Barry McGuigan, “The Clones Cyclone.” On the strength of this association, I picked McBride to win, but I couldn't find any takers in the club car as I went to buy more beers. I tried to call my father in West Virginia so he could place the bet with one of his bookies, but I couldn't get through. There was a limit to my luck, it seemed.

Then things took a turn for the worse.

\*

As we approached Fullerton, the southbound Surfliner's first stop, the train came to an abrupt halt. Veteran riders questioned what was going on. It's not unusual for trains to stop in order to let other trains pass, but this seldom, if ever, happens so close to the station. When the brief delay turned into a conspicuous departure from the schedule, travelers with people waiting for them in Fullerton got on their cell phones and determined what the rest of us were slowly beginning to surmise: Something was very wrong.

Soon the news spread up and down the cars: Someone had stepped in front of a train and had been killed. Suicide by Surfliner.

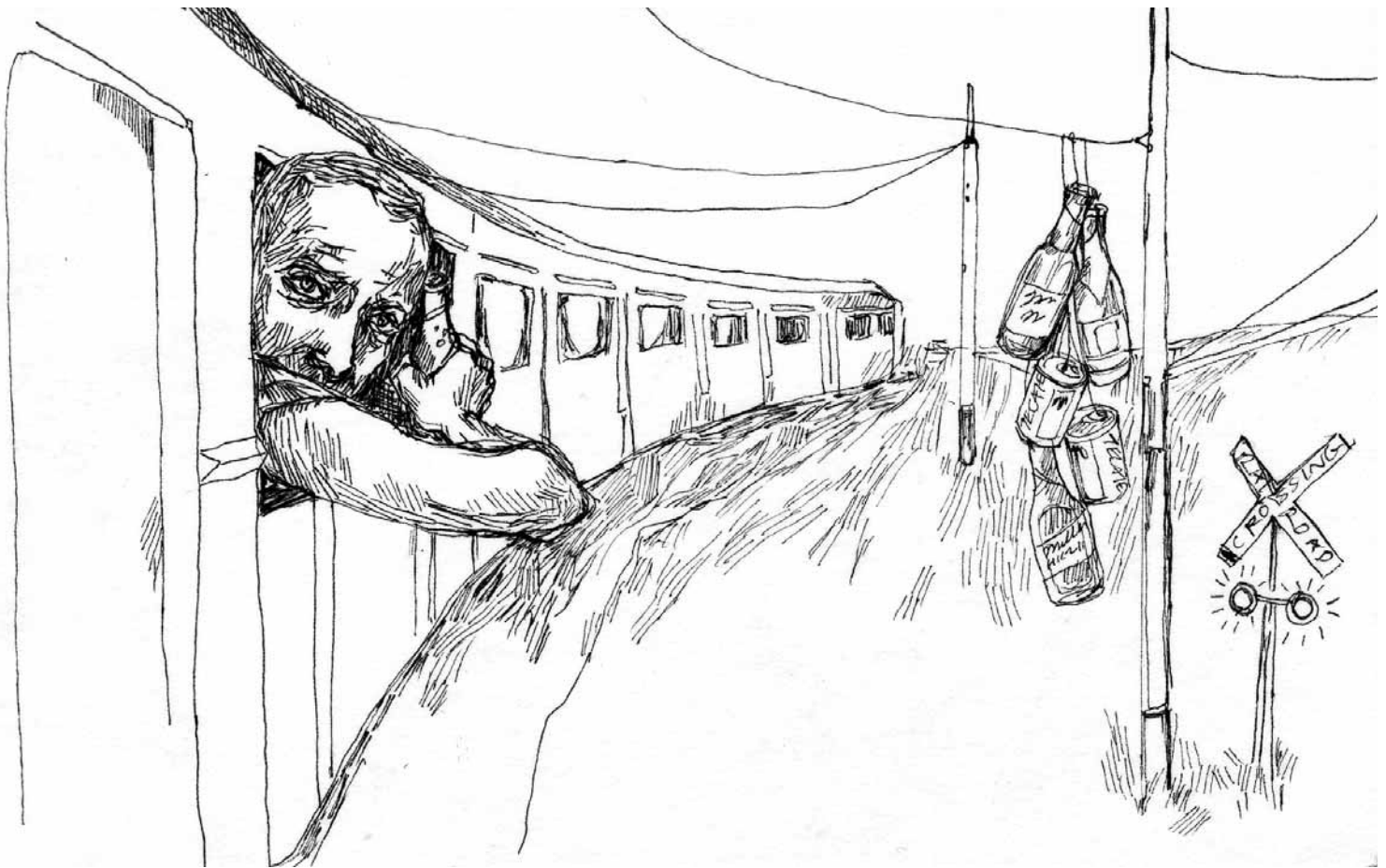
The Amtrak announcer told us there'd been an accident and that we would be delayed for a “period of time.” They didn't know how long exactly, but they assured us they would tell us when they did. You didn't have to be an experienced rider of the rails to know that “period of time” meant “we haven't got a fucking clue.”

This was bad news. The suicide meant it was no longer an accident but a crime scene. That meant no one would be allowed on or off the train while the police secured the scene and interviewed all the witnesses. The delay could last hours, they told us. How many? We wanted to know. We could be here all night.

\*

For a few years, I lived in a place where trains are a part of daily life. The railroad cuts through the heart of town. No matter where you are, you can hear them coming and going. This town is a magnet for clueless tourists, drugged-out hippies, college students, and intoxicated Indians. The conductors sound their horns day and night to clear them out of the way. Sometimes they don't make it in time. Sometimes they're so messed up they don't hear them until it's too late. Sometimes they wander onto the tracks on purpose.

(Do you know what happens to a body when it's struck by a train? It's not like getting trucked by a linebacker or hit by a Hyundai. After a train hits you, there's nothing left. Just pieces. Trains are the reason why they offer dismemberment insurance.)



CLAIRE CRONIN

## We clinked our cans together and took our medicine.

Just before last call, I'd sometimes get a pint of Beam and a twelve pack of cheap beer from the bartender (many bars in this town are also package stores that can sell liquor right up until the ridiculously early closing time of 12AM) and head for an old, abandoned platform from an out-of-service station. Someone had tagged the wall with the words "Poop Deck," so that's what it came to be called.

When I think of that town, one of the first things to come to mind is the nights on the Poop Deck. We'd get liquored up, wait for the trains to come, and stand at the edge of the platform so that we could feel the force of the trains as they roared past. You could measure the distance in inches. It wasn't the velocity with which they traveled that thrilled us, but their density, their mass. Those trains were the closest thing to an unstoppable force that I'd ever experienced with all of my senses.

There was a story that went around about a guy we all knew who claimed to have let a train roll over him and came away unscathed. He was tall, skinny and obviously a liar. Yet, we could imagine his long, narrow body between the rails. What we couldn't imagine was how he'd survived the panic of knowing

the train was coming and being directly in its path and doing nothing to get out of the way.

\*

We all respond differently to tragedy. Some weep. Some giggle and squirm. Others shrug their shoulders and move on.

On the Amtrak, we behaved in much the same manner. Some of us bitched, some of us moaned, and some of us got irredeemably shithoused.

The Miller Lite went first. Then we cleaned out the Corona. We dispensed with the charade and started ordering our beers six at a time. The bottles started to accumulate on the table. Soon there were so many that it looked like a ring toss game at the carnival.

We were tucking into the Rolling Rock when we got the news that Mike Tyson had lost the fight, TKOed in the sixth. The mammoth Irishman from Clones had prevailed.

Shortly afterward, the train started rolling and a cheer went up in the club car. We were finally going home. At least most of us were.

\*

When I think back on that day, I don't think of the Clones Colossus or Afloat Alex or even the two Irishmen. I think of the poor man who died on the tracks. Did he see our train coming and think, "There it is. The end of my troubles is here?" Or, was he in the grip of something darker, voices telling him to do something he knew was wrong, the wires crossed just long enough to override the instinct for survival embedded deep within our DNA?

(Mike Tyson has been there. The troubles, the demons. But when his train came around the bend in the form of a 6'6" mick, he got off the track and walked away.)

Whether we care to admit or not, the train is coming for us all. We each have our rendezvous with death. We can cheat it, we can meet it, or, if we're lucky or stupid or both, we can get close enough to feel its terrible power so that if we get a second chance, we know exactly what to do with it.

—Jim Ruland





**“Decadence!  
Corruption!  
A lack of  
enthusiasm for  
forging steel!”**

## Acrobats, Stuffed Animals, and Vodka! (A Russian History)

Attention amateur presidential historians! Put down your copy of Patti Davis/Reagan’s *The Way I See It!* Cast aside your treatise about Grover Cleveland’s illegitimate child (which led Cleveland haters to wear white ribbons saying “Ma, Ma, Where’s My Pa?”)! Destroy your photos of Jimmy Carter’s brother urinating in public!

Let’s stop here, and refer to the well-known Ridiculousness Measurement Index (RMI). (See Exhibit A.) As you can see, while these scandals have scored as high as 3.25, there is another scandal that broke the charts!

The scandal in question? Well, it goes by one name: Galina.

Galina Brezhnev was the daughter of Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet leader known mostly for his monstrous eyebrows and desperate, unsuccessful efforts to compete with Stalin and Lenin in the Cult of Personality Olympics, mostly by collecting medals for vague achievements.

When her father rose to power, the public became infatuated with Galina. At a 1962 state visit to Belgrade, diplomats were distracted from their politicking by the young Soviet beauty, who *Time* magazine described

as “a tall, striking blonde of 18, who could well turn out to be the Kremlin’s answer to Jackie Kennedy.”

That same *Time* correspondent, always attentive to the key points of any diplomatic summit, and not without his own East European fetish, wrote, “While Papa toured collective farms and industrial plants, Galina stole the show in her dazzling French dresses, Italian spike heels, and huge, dangling earrings.”

Indeed! For what could be more scandalous than the living, breathing incarnation of all that was wrong with the post-Stalin era? Decadence! Corruption! A lack of enthusiasm for forging steel!

The Western media loved her, and Galina did not disappoint. When she was twenty-two, she ran away with a circus acrobat. “He could hold 10 people on his shoulders, but failed to hold Galina too long,” a Russian TV newscaster said upon her death years later.

Galina soon ditched the acrobat and married a circus illusionist. The marriage lasted for nine days. Some speculate that Brezhnev wasn’t too pleased to see the pride of the Soviet world shacking up with a magician, and subsequently forced his daughter to end the relationship.

Despite this incident, Brezhnev doted on Galina, differentiating his approach from the parenting styles of other Soviet leaders. Whereas Brezhnev mostly indulged his daughter’s requests, Stalin followed an extreme version of the “spare the rod/spoil the child” axiom. (To wit, when Stalin’s son was captured in World War II while serving as an artillery lieutenant, Germany offered to exchange him for a captive field marshal. But Papa Joe issued the following paternal reply, “I do not exchange a marshal for a soldier.” His son later died in a POW camp.) But now is not the time to engage in an ideological debate about parenting praxis! Moving on!

In the 1970s, Galina spent time exploring her three main interests: getting drunk, having sex with circus performers, and accumulating luxury items. While on a trip to the Georgian town of Zugdidi, she stopped in at a local museum. According to the book *Kremlin Wives*, Galina took a particular interest in

the diadem (a fancy word for crown) of the Georgian Queen Tamara.

She “was so enamored of the diadem that she demanded that the noble Zugdidians give it to her as a present,” Larisa Vasileva writes. “The director of the museum, mad with grief, plucked up the courage to inform the first secretary of the Georgian Communist Party, Eduard Shevardnadze, who grabbed the government telephone and told Comrade Brezhnev that while Georgia deeply respected Galina Leonidovna, they could not give away their national heritage. ‘Send Galina home!’ was her father’s response.”

[Note to readers: Re-read the previous paragraph, and note that it was Vasileva who coined the now-popular phrase “noble Zugdidians.”]

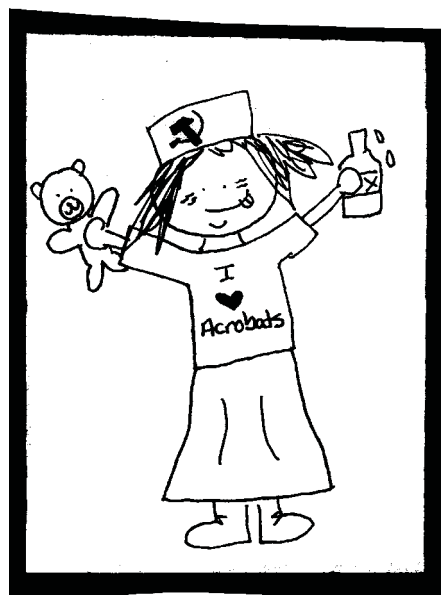
In 1982, Boris the Gypsy, yet another one of Galina’s bedroom circus pals, was arrested and charged with smuggling jewels. Authorities alleged that Boris even managed to hide diamonds in a circus elephant’s teeth. “Galina!” I know you’re saying, “How could you?”

But the arrest occurred under dubious circumstances, which just happened to be the exact same types of circumstances under which all arrests in the Soviet Union took place during this period.

Andropov, the future Soviet leader, was head of the KGB, and portrayed the arrest as part of his anticorruption efforts. But many interpreted the high profile case as Andropov’s attempt to position himself to succeed Brezhnev. As luck would have it, Brezhnev died that year, and Andropov was more than happy to devote himself tirelessly and selflessly to the Soviet cause!

Up to this point, Galina had managed to weave in and out of various circus-related social circles with nary a blemish to her criminal record! But, oh how times change when you start hanging out with a more “respectable” crowd!

At the insistence of her father, Galina married Yuri Churbanov, a non-descript, decidedly non-trapeze-swinging police official. Coincidentally, after he married Galina, Churbanov was quickly promoted to chief deputy interior minister.

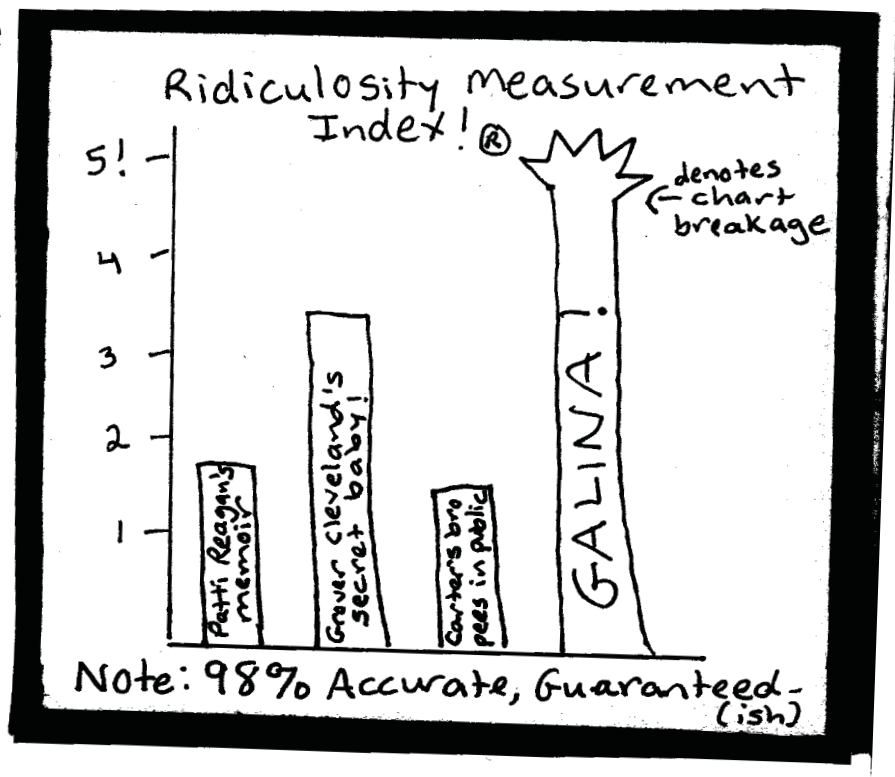


She had taken on the look of most middle-aged Russian women, which is to say,

she had deteriorated rapidly,

gained about a hundred pounds,

and seemed to have shrunk by about five inches.



The relationship was one of convenience. Galina continued to sleep with lion tamers, clowns, and acrobats, while her husband's career prospered. Ah, the joys of marriage!

But it was the late '80s, Gorbachev had come to power, and he was looking for some high-profile takedowns! And what could be more high profile than the associates of a certain spike heeled, intoxicated, pseudo-aristocrat?

So, in 1988, Churbanov was sent to prison for six years for taking bribes. Galina denied any knowledge of the illegal dealings and divorced Churbanov, saying, according to the *New York Times*, "he had been a bad husband." [Note: Knowing what I do about Galina, I find it highly unlikely that those were the exact words used.]

Authorities confiscated over \$110,000, and took almost everything she owned: a country home, several chandeliers, furniture, a Mercedes, and something else. A collection of stuffed animals worth about \$130,000. Seriously.

Two years later, Galina won a lawsuit to get her chandeliers and stuffed animals back, claiming that since they belonged to her, they should never have been confiscated when her husband went to prison.

When asked about the legal proceedings, the judge, sounding disappointed, told reporters, "There were no calls, no threats, nothing to influence the trial."

A government newspaper quoted Galina's testimony, but since my Send-a-Candy-Addict-to-Random-Places fellowship funding has dried up, we'll have to settle for

the version filtered through to us from the mighty *New York Times*, a paper which seems to have had one mindset when covering Galina: Do not make this interesting. And really, that, in itself, is an achievement.

Anyway, according to the *Times*, according to the government-owned paper, Galina told the court, "The Mercedes was a gift to my father from some Government official. I had a driver's license, and I drove the car. My father wasn't in the habit of giving gifts to my husbands."

As for her collection of plush creatures? The government paper did not provide any details. Lousy government-owned media. Denying the public their right to understand how one person could accumulate such an expensive collection of stuffed animals! Bah.

There are the obvious questions. Did she do it by purchasing four extremely rare Beanie Babies? Or did she take the opposite approach, diversifying her investments into a series, nay, an entire portfolio, of stuffed creatures?

"Do you really want to put all your money into Cabbage Patch Kids?" an investor might have told her. "I mean, those things are so hot right now, and they even come with their own birth certificates, but you can never be too careful!"

At any rate, by this time, Galina had other worries. She had taken on the look of most middle-aged Russian women, which is to say, she had deteriorated rapidly, gained about a hundred pounds, and seemed to have shrunk by about five inches.

In an effort to combine these feminine aging traditions with a more masculine approach, Galina dramatically increased her alcohol consumption.

She became a spectacle: a loud, large woman with poorly applied black eyeliner, stumbling around the outskirts of Moscow.

When a Russian documentary film crew arrived at her apartment about ten years ago, they were greeted with belches and requests for alcohol. "It's my castle," Galina said, standing in her apartment doorway, with unkempt hair, wearing a gigantic white fur hat and a bright red coat.

The interview consisted of Galina kissing the camera, making various drunken declarations, and dancing as though she was in possession of an invisible hula hoop.

"I would say, 'Papa, what is in his box?'" she said, belching. "'What a big chandelier! Just what I need!' He would say, 'For God's sake, have it!'"

When asked about her involvement in various corruption cases throughout the years, Galina replied, "This wasn't politics. It was love and screwing. Nice, huh?"

Sadly, by that point, Galina's circus days were over. Her daughter sent her to a psychiatric hospital a short while later, where she died in 1998, at age sixty-nine.

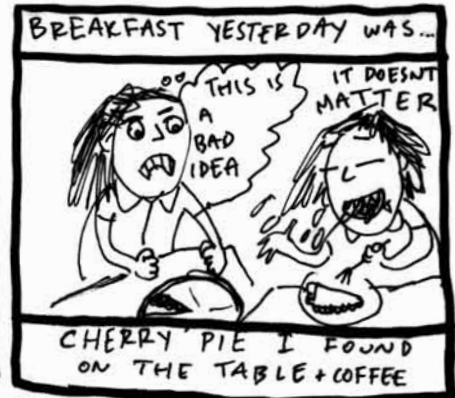
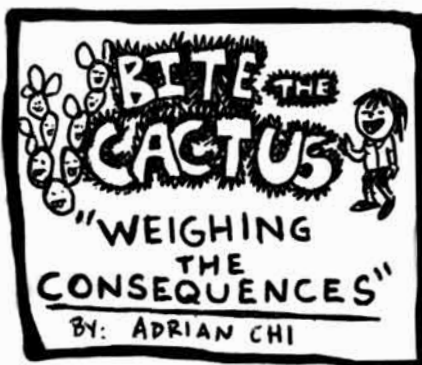
But the real question, looking back over decades of promiscuity, diamond smuggling, and stuffed animal hording, is how would Galina describe herself?

"I'm a shy person, really," she told the film crew.

—Maddy









# MY STUPID LIFE BY MITCH CLEM

WATERCOLORS BY NATION OF AMANDA

STEP ONE: LAY ON THE COUCH AND READ SOME COMICS.



STEP TWO: MASTURBATE TO SONIC YOUTH'S "BULL IN THE HEATHER" MUSIC VIDEO.



STEP THREE: CONSUME AN ENTIRELY UNHEALTHY DINNER.



STEP FOUR: PROCESS THE GUILT OF HAVING EATEN SAID UNHEALTHY DINNER.



STEP FIVE: MASTURBATE AGAIN.



STEP SIX: EMAIL TODD, THE EDITOR OF RAZORCAKE, ASKING FOR AN EXTENSION ON THE COLUMN DEADLINE.



STEP SEVEN: SPEND SEVERAL HOURS DICKING AROUND ONLINE WAITING FOR TODD TO WRITE BACK.



STEP EIGHT: UPON RECEIPT OF A RESTRAINED BUT CURT RESPONSE FROM TODD (CLEARLY WISHING I'D MAKE A DEADLINE FOR ONCE), GET SUDDEN PANIC-STRIKEN MOMENT OF MOTIVATION.



STEP NINE: MASTURBATE AND READ SOME COMICS AT THE SAME TIME.



APLOGIES TO TODD, AMANDA, KIM SHATTUCK, PAUL DINI, BRUCE TIMM, SONIC YOUTH, KATHLEEN HANNAH, + ALL THE WONDERFUL READERS OF RAZORCAKE



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# TAKE A MYSTICAL JOURNEY

**TIM VERSION - USED KIDS**  
PRETTY BOY THORSON  
NINJA GUN  
SPLIT 7"

**TURKISH TECHNO**  
THE ANCHOR  
SPLIT 7"

**INFECTED**  
"AWAKE IN OUR OWN GRAVES"  
7" EP

**DUDE JAMS**  
TOO MANY DAVES  
SPLIT 7"

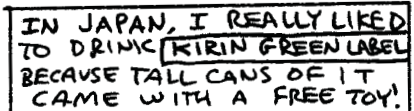
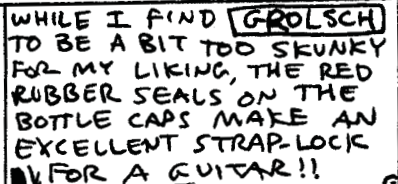
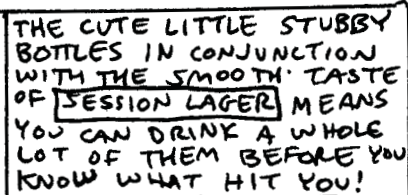
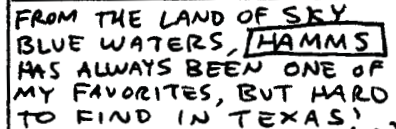
**THE DUKES OF HILLSBOROUGH**  
"GENERATION TINNITUS"  
CD - LP

UNICORN RIDES SOLD HERE !!!  
ADDRECS.COM - NOIDEARECORDS.COM  
VINYLCOLLECTIVE.COM - INTERPUNK.COM  
KISSOFDEATHRECORDS.COM - SHOPRADIOCAST.COM - ITUNES

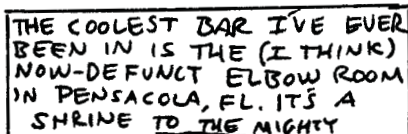
**ADD RECORDS**  
SHIT'S TIGHT

AS I WRITE THIS, AUSTIN IS IN THE MIDST OF A RECORD-SETTING HEAT WAVE. THERE'S NOTHING BETTER ON A HOT DAY THAN A COLD BEER, SO HERE'S MY LIST OF...

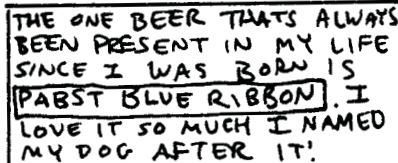
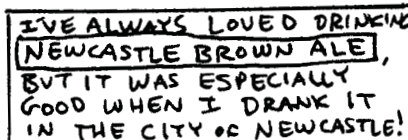
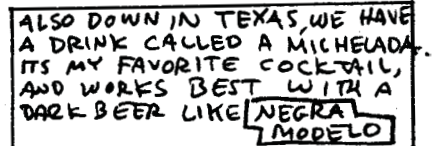
THE ABSOLUTE MOST DELICIOUS  
BEER I EVER HAD HAPPENED  
TO BE A **CORONA** ON A  
BRUTALLY HOT DAY IN JUAREZ.



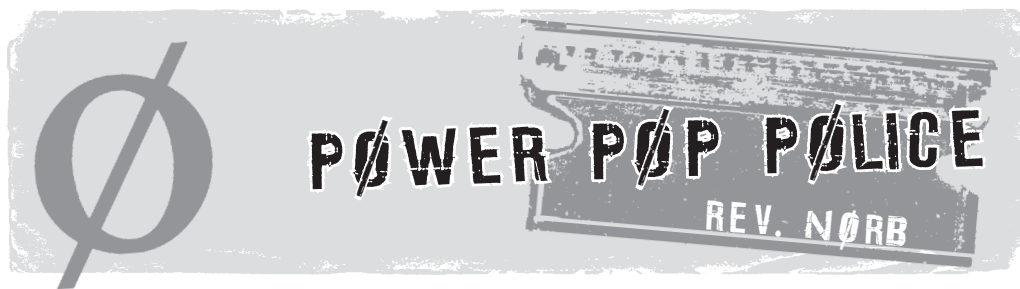
**FAMILY MO**



HARD-CORE TEXANS SWEAR  
BY SHINER, BUT I PREFER  
THE CHEAPER, LESS AUTHENTIC  
**LONE STAR**







**“Wacky is our business, and business is good!”**

# TOO HOT TO LIVE, TOO PINK TO DIE

or

THE QUASI-TRIUMPHANT, APPROPRIATELY CHAOTIC, AND, AS ALWAYS, MILDLY EMBARRASSING RETURN OF BORIS THE SPRINKLER

My oxygen supply has unexpectedly expired as i wriggle and spaz within the friendly confines of my pink Zentai suit, which has suddenly left me suffocating in a self-imposed torture chamber both fruity and whimsical, not to mention embarrassingly form-fitting. As i fumble for the mysteriously AWOL zipper that i really truly believed was last seen on the back of my head ((accessing said zipper representing my only chance of survival and/or narrow thwartation of brain death)), my final thoughts are that dying onstage at Insubordination Fest is really a hell of a way to go. I'M GOING TO FUCKING DIE! ONSTAGE! IN BALTIMORE, YET! They'll bury me in a bouffant wig and paste-on pencil moustache next to Edgar Allan Poe, whilst funeral guests in wide-heeled pumps and bowling shirts teabag my corpsely noggin as a final show of respect! I'm going to die in the middle of "Weird Lookin' Woman," before we even get to throw the toilet paper, and i'm the guy who charged that shit! **I'm going to die onstage at a fucking REUNION show! WE'RE NOTEVENAREALBANDANYMORE!!! I'm not even supposed to BE here today!!!**

...I mean, the excursion started off as a more or less normal Boris trip: After a few hours of travel, i told the guys that i thought i knew where a Taco Bell® was, and that we should head in that direction. OK, sure, this time the Taco Bell® was in the Detroit airport instead of off some interstate exit, but what the fuck, we're Boris! It's what we do! Or, more correctly, it's what *i* do and make everyone else in the band do along with me. *What's it to ya?* We arrive at the Baltimore airport and are summarily whisked off to some weird place in Delaware ((wait, i'm sorry, was that redundant?)) by Ric Six, our third bassist, who currently resides in said puny but effervescently triangular state. We are playing Insubordination Fest in Baltimore tomorrow, and the four of us – the MEGA ANAL lineup, if you're scoring at home – have not practiced nor played together since the Clinton administration – a decade of atrophy, bloat, and recreational subdural hematoma. We have not practiced in this decade, this century, or this millennium. Tomorrow we are going

to play a huge festival with the Dead Milkmen, Dillinger 4, Teen Idols, Squirtgun, Parasites, Beatnik Termites, Methadones, and like fifty other bands. PUNK! ((i'm not exactly sure why we never played Insubordination Fest before this. I guess it was because i viewed it as a celebration of a style of music of which i'm not so sure i'm not still sick of. Then again, after missing Sweet Baby last year, one supposes that the yolk is on me [[it should be noted that the guy who was indirectly responsible for me getting into Sweet Baby, Dave Nazworthy {{once of the Chemical People & Down By Law}}, now produces porno movies for a living]] [[and, speaking of porn, and MEGA ANAL, which we were, sometime in the interim between said album's appearance in 1997 and our reunion practice in 2009, some genius pornmeister began emitting a whole series of niche porn DVDs with the enchanting, family-friendly title of "Mega Anal." You know, "Mega Anal Vol. 1," "Mega Anal Vol. 2," etc. Also during said interim, the last song on side one of OUR "Mega Anal" – namely, "There Ain't No Pabst In Tijuana" – was used in a porn movie – but the "Mega Anal" porn SONG wasn't actually in one of the "Mega Anal" porn MOVIES, it was in some other random movie. That makes no sense to me. What makes even less sense to me is that, of ALL the possible songs a pornist could utilize for a porn soundtrack, some aspiring brain surgeon chose one with lyrics about not being able to find a favorite brand of beer in Mexico – in a movie that had nothing to do with Pabst, Tijuana, or even gentlemen wearing large chunks of foam rubber cheese on their gourds. I mean...*what the fuck?* I guess if i knew the answer to this, i'd be able to quit my day job and shoot pornos for a living, like Dave {{and listen to Sweet Baby cassettes in my van, also like Dave}}. *Out this Tuesday: REV. NØRB'S BAD ASIAN GIRLS BEHAVING POORLY VOL. 26! ASK FOR IT BY NAME!]]]]* We exchange minor pleasantries with the Six family, haul our gear into Ric's basement ((home of the world's largest jenkem bong!)), and, with some trepidation, run through a setlist for the

first time since 1999. It sounds kinda like what you'd imagine it would sound like after ten years of inactivity. In the middle of practice, Paul #2 receives a text informing him that Michael Jackson and Farrah Fawcett-Majors have both died. I state that the fact they both died during our first practice in ten years is obviously a sign of some sort; for good or ill i cannot currently say. I also remark that these deaths tend to come in threes, so i'll be watching my back. We knock off practice after about an hour. I mean, no use disgruntling the crowd with distasteful slickness, ya know? On the morning of the show, we practice for the second hour in ten years, then head off to some corporate obscenity to stock up on toilet paper, mini-trampolines, fluorescent posterboard, flat pointy pieces of wood, and harmonicas ((they wind up having no harmonicas, so i borrow one from Ric's four-year-old daughter)), and return for lunch. I decide that now is as good a time as any to bust out my gig outfit: The Sacred Mystic Antler Helmet™, my cat-eye white prescription shades, the fluorescent orange and black vest i wore during Boris' first performance ((26 September 1992, opening for Dee Dee Ramone & The Chinese Dragons)), and my aforementioned hot pink Zentai suit ((accent on the HOT)) ((for the squares amongst you, a Zentai suit is a nylon/spandex bodysuit that covers your entire body, including your entire face and head. The geniuses in charge of modern dance invented Zentai suits for times when their craft required the depersonalization of the dancer, or for people to hang around on stage during Parasites shows looking like a kinky mannequin. They zip from the back. You look like a fucking freak and can't pee. They're great)). I zip myself up head to toe in nylon-insulated pink shiny spandex, add my orange vest and cat-eye white sunglasses, and very s-l-o-w-l-y make my way down the stairs to join the rest of the band. I am greeted with peals of laughter and the sound of milk being snorted up through a sextuplet of nostrils. *Score one for Zentai nation!* We practice the set a third and final time. The Zentai suit is a little warm, but i think i can pull it off. We have practiced for three hours



RYAN GELATIN

I mean,  
no use  
disgruntling  
the crowd  
with  
distasteful  
slickness,  
ya  
know?

in the last ten years. That averages out to just about three minutes a week. Sounds about right. We haul ourselves up to Baltimore in time to see Pansy Division's drummer kick over the drumset in a snit after breaking a head during the first song, necessitating a twenty-minute Rock Stoppage. Later in the set, the bass player admonishes the crowd to not use the word "gay" as a pejorative. Dude, if you don't want people to say shit like "that's so gay" anymore, then DON'T KICK OVER YOUR FREEKIN' DRUMS IN A PRISSY TEMPER TANTRUM WHEN SHIT MALFUNCTIONS! ((Pansy Division's new album is called "That's So Gay." Boris put out an album about eight or nine years ago called "Boris The Sprinkler is Gay." I assume their next album will be called "Mega Anal." I applaud their genius)). Finally, the grim hour arrives. I suit up, and we take the stage. I start things with a knock-knock joke that i stole from the former president of the Women's Flat Track Derby Association. *All heck breaks loose!* Aged and infirm bodies fly about the stage! Legions of security guards who look like the guy from the TV commercials who takes back the Miller High Life™ catch and release body-passed fans dressed like Superman®! *Wacky is our*

*business, and business is good!* I can "sort of" see through the Zentai suit – lights and basic forms. The plan is to go full Zentai for the first few songs, then pop the hood off, don the Antler Helmet, and go from there. It is hot as fucking fuck onstage. For the first song and a half, i have no problems breathing. For about three seconds, it suddenly becomes difficult to breathe. Immediately thereafter, I CAN'T BREATHE AT FUCKING ALL. My Zentai suit somehow went from spandex to cellophane in the course of about two minutes. I'm grabbing at the back of my head. I can't find the goddamn zipper. I'M GOING TO DIE ON STAGE. *Well, go ahead and follow THAT, Dead Milkmen!* I'M GOING TO DIE! I'M GOING TO BE THE THIRD MEMBER OF THE MICHAEL JACKSON-FARRAHFAWCETT-MAJORS-REV. NØRB UNHOLY DEAD PERSON TRINITY, BONDED IN A SATANIC THREE-WAY OF DOOOOM FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE!!! OF WHICH I HAVE ABOUT TWELVE SECONDS LEFT!!! Suddenly, calm overcomes me. Encased within pink Zentai hell, i am visited by the spirit of Sky Saxon, who informs me that HE also died yesterday, along with Michael and Farrah, thusly HE is the final member of the

Michael-Farrah-Someone Else Unholy June 25<sup>th</sup> Death Trinity, and it is not yet my time. He also informs me that i'm "Pushin' Too Hard," and that i should mail a ten-dollar donation to some weird UFO church that he will get me the address of in a subsequent visit. Sky Saxon's ghost directs my errant fingers to my zipper, and i pull my head free. Never did the sweat of a trillion stinky Baltimoreans smell so sweet! The rest of the set is a blur of plastic swords, bouncing, toilet paper, and Jetty Boys. Saturday was much more reserved, with my only real excitement coming when i ventured onstage to attempt to replace a nude Paddy of Dillinger 4's underwear, which had been yanked to his ankles by a mystery assailant. Pat's grundies were the largest, coldest, wettest, blackest diaper with which i've ever had the opportunity to work, and i swear they made scraping noises as they bound against his skin as i pulled them up. Upon returning from the bathroom and a thorough hand-washing, i saw that Pat was already naked again. I eyeballed his measurements for a Zentai suit and grabbed another beer.

Love  
Nørb





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## SUMMER JAMS '09...

### HELLO SHITTY PEOPLE "S/T" LP

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### RINGERS "HURRY UP AND WAIT" 12"

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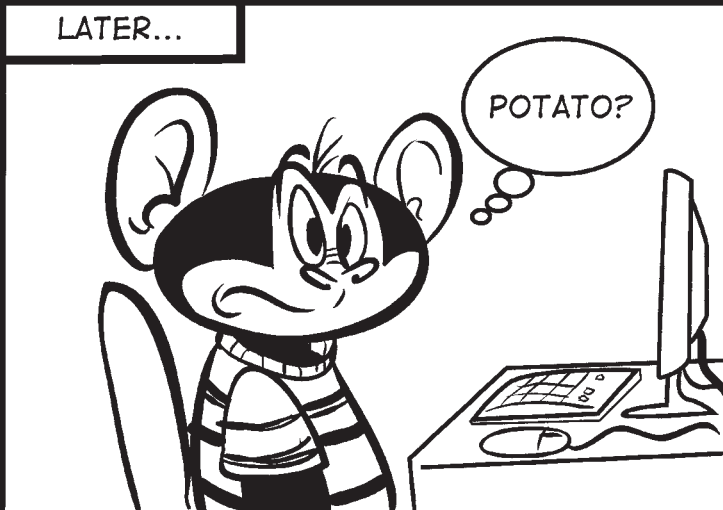
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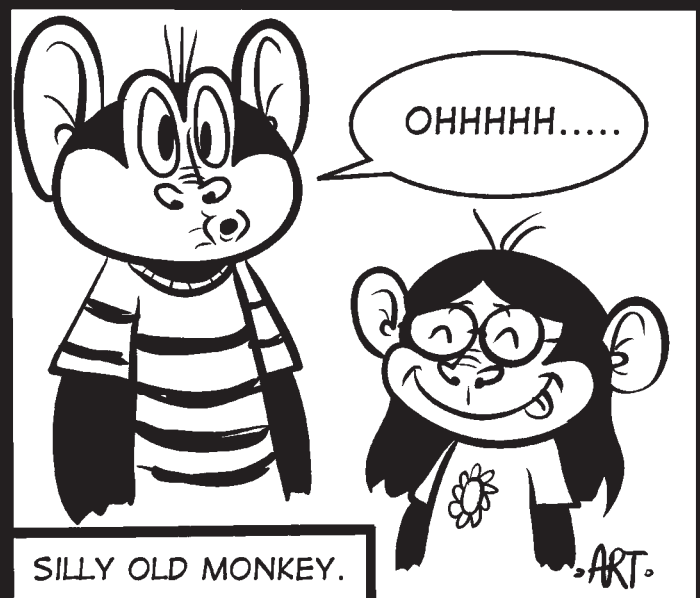
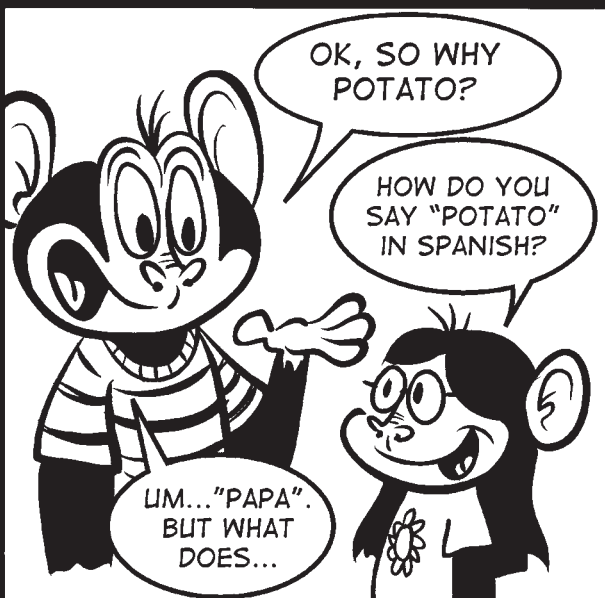
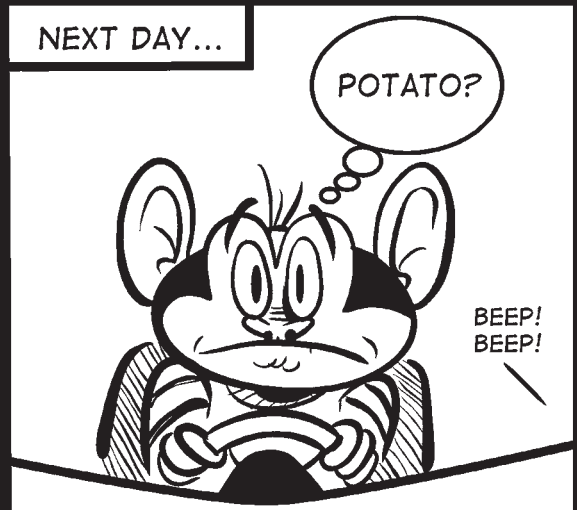
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OR: KIDS ARE STRANGE.



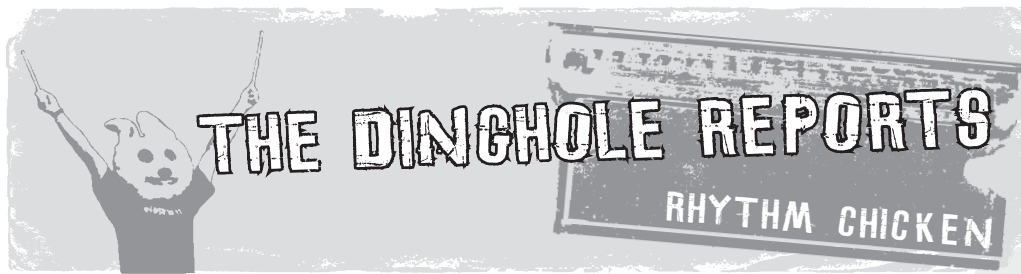
LATER...



NEXT DAY...







**“I guess you could say I teabagged the crowd.”**

# Maximum Insubordination!!!!

The Dinghole Reports  
By The Rhythm Chicken  
(Commentary by Francis Funyuns)  
[Edited by Dr. Sicnarf]

So, I have a friend named Phil who, in recent years, finished med school and is now a doctor. We call him Dr. Phil. My Dr. Phil loves the Humpers and the Jesus Lizard. He is the official chili medic on my famed chili runs. He is also the official Rhythm Chicken medical team, assisting in any ruckus-related ailments. He is a good doctor.

Last summer, on a whim, Dr. Phil bought a cheap little outboard motorboat. It is a very odd little square-shaped waverunner that looks more like a beer cooler with a toaster posing as a motor on the back. The previous owner put cheap hardware store lettering across the back end, naming this vessel “Dream One.” Dr. Phil knew the renaming of the boat was of utmost importance. The list of possible names was getting quite lengthy and ridiculous. My recommendation was to simply go to the hardware store and buy a “B.” The next time I saw Phil’s boat, there was a large red “B” added to the other black letters. The “Dream Bone” was born.

(Yeah, yeah. Big whoop. Where’s the ruckus? – F.F.)

## **Dinghole Report #105: Maximum Insubordination!**

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #445)

This past June, nearby Green Bay’s Boris The Sprinkler played a reunion show in, of all places, Baltimore. I was lucky enough to tag along with the Sprinklers to Insubordination Fest ’09. Baltimore’s Sonar nightclub was packed both nights of the fest. Boris played Friday night and threw toilet paper at the crowd. Fun was had. On Saturday night, a rumble erupted from the middle of the crowd as my ruckus rhythms finally graced Maryland! The crowd roared. I hopped away and disappeared into the crowd. Maryland, check.

Not long after my gig, Paddy of D4 pulled me and Boris drummer, Paul #2, to the nearest bar and had shots of Jameson and Makers Mark lined up. This on top of many hours of consuming “Natty Bohs.”

[From the land of PLEASANT LIVING!  
– Dr. S.]

This ended up being a most potent combination and my ruckus-ometer simply went haywire. I bought many over-priced beers to simply open and splash on the band and crowd. Paul #2 tried stopping me, but his old, drunken ass was too slow! I liberated whatever booty was left backstage and threw it on the crowd and band. Handfuls of teabags rained on the crowd. I guess you could say I teabagged the crowd. To put it mildly, I was a menace. Later, the club/event managers pulled me aside to tell me I was no longer welcome in Sonar, or Baltimore. Now, in retrospect, I regret some of my actions. No longer will I mix National Bohemian, Jameson, and Makers. However, I do have a great name for my next 45, *The Rhythm Chicken, Banned in Baltimore!* Many hearty clucks of thanks go out to various members of the Arrivals, Toys That Kill, and URTC for joining the RC’s roadie militia... and to Boris The Sprinkler for not leaving me there... AND to the Jetty Boys for rocking a great set in Ric Six’s Delaware basement the next afternoon!

(Banned in Baltimore? Is that even possible? Golly, Chicken, you sure do know how to embarrass yourself. – F.F.)

[Baltimore, the city that reads! – Dr. S.]

## **Dinghole Report #106: Meet the Parents... IN A PARADE!**

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #446)

Yet another summer in Wisconsin means yet another South Shore Frolics parade in Milwaukee’s southside! My Main Hen drove up from Chicago the night before. Along with Ruckus O’Reily, we all enjoyed “what made Milwaukee famous.” The next morning, we were all on this year’s Rhythm Chicken float, waiting for the parade to start. Our cooler was well stocked with brandy slushies and Pabst. The tradition of duct-taping freshly emptied beer cans to the float as additional decorations continued. This year’s Chicken float was looking to be like any other.

Then, my Main Hen’s phone rang. It was her father. He had ridden his Harley up from Chicago and wanted to see his daughter’s new boyfriend doing this “chicken thing.”

Before I could comprehend this sudden news, I was standing there shirtless in my Pabst suspenders and blaze orange shorts, shaking hands with my girlfriend’s father for the first time. “Good morning, sir! Very nice to meet you. Can I interest you in a brandy slushy?” The first-time meeting with a girlfriend’s father is usually awkward and stressful, but this really took the cake. Inviting him to join us on the float seemed like the right thing to do.

Within thirty minutes of meeting my Main Hen’s father, he was riding on my float, drinking Pabst, and throwing candy to children! Yet another truly surreal moment in my life. As usual, we inched down the parade route towards Rushmor Records, where there is always a riotous gang of rock cretins ready to interact with the ruckus. This year, Ruckus O’Reily prepared a huge bag of those orange foam candy circus peanuts! The circus peanut mosh zone was undeniable! It was a circus peanut tornado! RUCKUS! During this stop on the parade route, my girlfriend’s father was handing out little booze bottles to the rock cretins! Does this stuff really happen? Forget the Fockers, meet Mr. Twardzik! During the post-parade trip back through the neighborhood, he yelled out at some pedestrians, “Take your clothes off!” Buck, buck, BUCKAW!

Later that afternoon, the Hen and I went down to Chicago so we could attend a wedding the next day. Monday morning I hit the road at five AM and had to be back at work in northern Wisconsin by noon. I stopped at White Castle and got a sack of sliders, fuel for the journey. I finished my last slider just as I rolled into work. I was terribly tired and road-worn as I punched in.

Later, as I was finishing my shift and ready for nothing but a serious nap, the phone rang. Dr. Phil’s voice urgently asked, “Your drums still in the car?” I told him yes. The next thing I know we were loading them into the Dream Bone. It was a gorgeous summer evening in Door County. Lake Michigan was swarming with lazy boaters of all kinds, enjoying the perfect weather. The Dream Bone was full. Dr. Phil and our friend Kevin were up front, both wearing motorcycle helmets to conceal their identity. My Chicken kit was somehow wedged into the back of this tiny boat. Having no room for a drum throne, I simply hung my chicken butt off the side of the boat. This was a sight like none other, I’m sure. We launched and



The Dream Bone Maritime Tour, Nicolet Bay, WI: two men in motorcycle helmets hauling a drumming chicken across the waves!

KEVIN RUCKUS

## The circus peanut mosh zone was undeniable!

skipped across the water towards Nicolet Bay, a guarded harbor popular with pleasure boaters. The Dream Bone Maritime Tour had begun!

Pulling into Nicolet Bay, my ruckus rock shook awake relaxing boaters! They all gawked in amazement at what they saw: a crappy little boat manned by two men in motorcycle helmets hauling a drumming chicken across the waves! AHOY, MATEY!!! AVAST YE!!! THAR SHE BLOWS! Everyone screamed as they all quickly pulled out their cameras. The Dream Bone paraded around the harbor with ruckus rock emanating from its rear end! Boat horns wailed! Ruckus rocked the boat! Just as quickly as we arrived, we circled around and then skimmed away towards the next harbor! Aaaaar! Shiver me ruckus!

Over the next few hours we zipped up and down the coastline, from harbor to harbor, dishing out doses of my maritime ruckus for other boaters. Then we scoured the shoreline and accosted the land lovers on shore who were trying to get photos of the perfect sunset. I can just imagine Joe and Judy Tourist on the shoreline, ready to take

the perfect photo of another perfect Door County sunset. Then their precious little scene is invaded by two helmeted hellions and a drumming chicken in a rickety little speedboat! This is truly the fresh new medium for dispensing rock and roll!

After hitting a few harbors and rocking various shorelines, we found a quiet spot and cut the motor to enjoy some pirate juice. This was when we noticed our cell phones full of text messages, all requests from various locals to come back! ENCORE! ENCORE! We made a few repeat gigs here and there, but the sun was down and the sky was darkening. The rock voyage was nearing the end. The Dream Bone pulled back into the Ephraim harbor and we loaded her back up on the trailer, but Dr. Phil didn't want the tour to end just yet.

There was an outdoor concert in the Ephraim town park where a couple hundred tourists were in lawn chairs clapping politely to the evening music. Dr. Phil drove his Jeep through town and past the park, all the while towing the Dream Bone, which contained one wildly drumming Rhythm Chicken wearing

a life preserver floatation device! Safety First! The maritime tour somehow continued on DRY LAND! The folks in the park were stunned to have their concert interrupted by a drumming chicken who rolled by in the back of a boat... right down the main road!

We pulled the boat across the peninsula to the AC Tap, where a fine dinner of deep-fried mac and cheese triangles awaited us. Slowly, other boaters stumbled in the front door and excitedly approached us exclaiming, "You'll never guess what we saw today!!!"

Tomorrow is the employee summer party for the local newspaper, the *Peninsula Pulse*. The daytime party is out on Lake Michigan on a pontoon boat, and they've requested more maritime ruckus aboard their vessel. AHOY MATEY!

(Doesn't Baltimore have a harbor? – F. F.)

–Rhythm Chicken  
rhythmchicken@hotmail.com



# FUNFUNFUN *fest*



## BLACK stage

Jesus Lizard, Danzig, Gorilla Biscuit, Face To Face, Fucked Up, 7 Seconds, D.R.I., Torche, Melt Banana, Flipper, Coalesce, Riverboat Gamblers, Street Dogs, Russian Circles, Nightmarchers, Youth Brigade, Mika Miko, All Leather, Young Widows, Coliseum, Underground Railroad to Candyland, Off With Their Heads, Reign Supreme, Rat King, Pack Of Wolves, Roller, and more

## BLUE stage

The Cool Kids, Pharcyde, GZA/Genius (performing liquid swords w/ special guests), Kid Sister, Buraka Som Sistema, DJ Numark (Jurassic 5), HEALTH, Neon Indian, MC Chris, SSION, Alaska In Winter, Vega, Foot Patrol, Astronautalis, Sugar & Gold, LAX, Peligrosa DJs, Beta Player, and more

## ★ 2009 LINEUP ★

## ORANGE stage

Les Savy Fav, Yeasayer, Mission of Burma, Lucero, Why?, Broadcast, Atlas Sound, Death (detroit), No Age, Red Sparowes, Shonen Knife, Fuck Buttons, Times New Viking, Harlem, This Will Destroy You, Crystal Antlers, Growing, Black and White Years, Girl In A Coma, Royal Bangs, The Laughing, and more

## FELLOW stage

Destroyer, Whitest Kids You Know Sketch Comedy Troupe, Brian Posehn, King Khan & BBQ, Shearwater, Todd Barry, Nick Thune, El Mariachi De Bronx, Josh Fadem, Strange Boys, Hannibal Burress, James Husband (Of Montreal), Brendan Walsh, Cedric Burnside & Lightning Malcolm, Metallagher, Bankrupt and the Borrowers, Altercation Comedy hour, Brazos solo, New Movement Comedy Group

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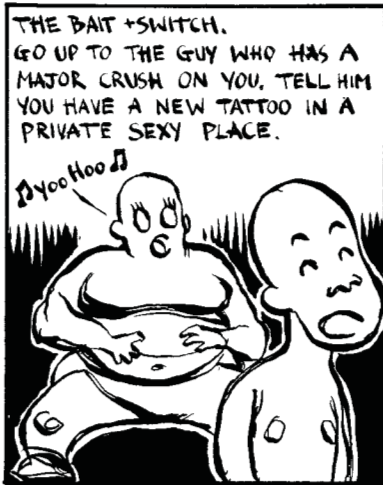
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## WHO ARE YOU?

"I'm glad he wasn't bleeding at any point, so it wasn't that bad of a date."

# Nardwuar vs. Kathy Griffin The Human Serviette and Lily Tomlin

**Nardwuar:** Who are you?

**Kathy Griffin:** I'm Kathy Griffin, star of *Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List*.

**Nardwuar:** And Kathy, who do you have beside you?

**Kathy:** Lily Tomlin—legend, icon, and, uh, multi-award-winning genius.

**Nardwuar:** Hello Lily! Welcome to Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada!

**Lily Tomlin:** Thank you. I'm delighted to be here.

**Nardwuar:** I'm on the d-list, with you! We're on the d-list!

**Kathy:** Lily's not on the d-list! Cut that crap.

**Nardwuar:** But we're live on the d-list, right now. We are live on the d-list.

**Kathy:** We're on the multi-Emmy-Award-winning show *My Life on the D-List*, it's true.

**Nardwuar:** Now, Kathy, the reason I'm on the d-list right now is Andrew W.K. He set me up with you. What can you say about Andrew W.K.? He went on a date with you. Punk rocker, Andrew W.K.

**Kathy:** Yeah, he was very, very sweet and I went to his performance artist show.

**Nardwuar:** He bled for me. When I interviewed Andrew W.K., he bled for me.

**Lily:** Oh yeah?

**Kathy:** He cuts himself in front of his...

**Lily:** Cut himself, right. That is pleasant.

**Kathy:** Yeah.

**Nardwuar:** Do you have any message for him? A failed date with Andrew W.K.

**Kathy:** Um, I... you know, I'm glad he wasn't bleeding at any point, so it wasn't that bad of a date.

**Lily:** He didn't bleed on your date?

**Kathy:** No! Didn't bleed on my...

**Nardwuar:** So—the date continues. I'm bleeding on you! The date lives on, through Andrew W.K. Me, Nardwuar, The Human Serviette. That's why I'm here.

**Kathy:** Uh... uh... *Bonjour, ca va?*

**Nardwuar:** So, the... You got it! The Serviette! The Human Napkin!

**Kathy:** Yes! [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** And here you are also with Lily...

**Kathy:** Do you speak any French at all?

**Lily:** No, I look forward to that (in French accent).

**Nardwuar:** Lily, I have a gift for you.

Because here we are, in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, where Robert Altman did the movie *McCabe & Mrs...*

**Lily:** Miller.

**Nardwuar:** Mrs. Miller! Filmed in Vancouver! And guess what? You've been in quite a few Robert Altman productions, haven't you?

**Lily:** Occasionally, I have.

**Nardwuar:** And I have a gift for you. This is a tribute to the movie *Nashville* that you were in. [Nardwuar hands Lily a CD]

**Lily:** Uh-huh.

**Nardwuar:** Done by some Vancouver/Victoria artists, Carolyn Mark And Friends!

**Lily:** A DVD?

**Nardwuar:** It's a CD. It's a tribute to the soundtrack of *Nashville*!

**Lily:** Oh! So I'll be on here? Someone'll be tributing me, singing gospel?

**Nardwuar:** Such great tunes are out there in the movie *Nashville*.

**Lily:** [sings] "He lives, He lives! Christ Jesus lives today." Like that?

**Nardwuar:** A classic! *Nashville* paid tribute by some Canadians! Canadian connection.

**Lily:** I'm dying to hear it. Can we put it on now?

**Kathy:** Now, is there any kind of a Canadian connection at all?

**Nardwuar:** Well, there is a big Canadian connection, because you're in Canada, and I'm afraid about giving that gift to Lily, Kathy Griffin.

**Kathy:** Why would you be?

**Nardwuar:** Because it's the movie *Nashville*, and your good friend is from...

**Kathy:** My?

**Nardwuar:** Your good friend from Nashville is...

**Kathy:** Andrew W.K.?

**Nardwuar:** No, Miley...

**Kathy:** Cyrus!

**Nardwuar:** I was afraid I would get you mad, because when you think of Nashville, you think of...

**Kathy:** Miley Cyrus' demise.

**Nardwuar:** Yeah, what do you think about her dad accompanying her on dates?

**Kathy:** [laughs] I think the dad's living off her is more the story there.

**Nardwuar:** One person who represents Canada, I don't know if you'd agree with this, Lily, is...

**Lily:** Who represents? Uh, Danny Aykroyd.

**Nardwuar:** No, Celine...

**Kathy:** Dion!

**Nardwuar:** Celine Dion. Now Kathy, I have a bit of bone to pick with you. I have a bone to pick with you. You rat on Celine Dion's husband.

**Kathy:** René Angélique.

**Nardwuar:** Now, René deserves some props. Check this out. [Nardwuar hands Kathy a record] This is René, in his band, Les Baronets!

**Kathy:** Which one?

**Nardwuar:** There he is, right there, René.

**Kathy:** *C'est René?*

**Lily:** Oh boy!

**Nardwuar:** That is René. So he was in the game long before Celine, wasn't he, Kathy Griffin?

**Kathy:** Yes, I just think it seems odd that they were dating when she was nine years old, or whatever.

**Nardwuar:** But still, he's been puttin' it out! He's been doin' it! Like, will you give René some more props now that he actually had a record, Les Baronets?

**Kathy:** *Oui, je regrette, René.*

**Lily:** He looks like a Saudi prince here.

**Nardwuar:** Have you guys met some Saudi princes?

**Lily:** I have met one.

**Kathy:** Who? Sultan of Brunei?

**Lily:** No, he was selling a house.

**Kathy:** Really! And he's actually there, and says, like, "Oh hi, Lily."

**Lily:** Well, I was sort of in the background. No, I don't believe he knew who I was.

**Kathy:** Interesting. And they just say, "This is the house of a Saudi prince. Do you want it?"

**Lily:** The realtor told me it was the house of a Saudi prince. [laughs]

**Kathy:** Well, of course, they love that crap.

**Nardwuar:** Kathy Griffin, you said some naughty words on CNN the other night, didn't you?

**Kathy:** Yes, I did.

**Nardwuar:** You also committed the ultimate sin, you called Wolf Blitzer.

**Kathy:** Boring.

**Nardwuar:** How dare you! That is amazing!

**Kathy:** I got a lot of nerve. That's how.



DANNY MARTIN

**Nardwuar:** But actually, it was a bit more than that, Kathy. You said, quote, “Knock the...”

**Kathy:** Oh, I said, um, during the commercial break, I...

**Lily:** I know, I heard it.

**Kathy:** [laughs]

**Nardwuar:** You said...

**Kathy:** I said, “I don’t go to your jobs and knock the dicks out of your mouth.”

**Nardwuar:** Now, is that an allusion to the *Mr. Show* show, ‘cause *Mr. Show* used that little quip. Have you seen that show?

**Kathy:** No, no. *Mr. Show* was making fun of the way I did as an old hack, hack response to a heckler. Like the old Borscht Belt comedians. It’s, like, the oldest response to a heckler in the book.

**Nardwuar:** Well, I guess what I was wondering, who invented “dick”?

**Lily:** ... (in reference to previous question) Like people who say “I don’t come to your job and kick the shovel out of your hand.”

**Kathy:** Oh!

**Nardwuar:** Lily, you know a lot about dicks, don’t you?

**Lily:** Quite a bit.

**Nardwuar:** You know a lot about dicks because you go all the way back to Dick Martin! From *Laugh-In*.

**Lily:** I do indeed.

**Nardwuar:** And you know what’s interesting? Check out the front of this record, Kathy. It’s amazing. [Nardwuar hands Kathy a gatefold *Laugh-In* LP] What is happening at the front of this record? What word is on the front of this record of *Laugh In*?

**Kathy:** “He’s Dick.”

**Nardwuar:** “He’s Dick”! So, why is the word “dick” okay to say in the ‘60s, but not okay to say now?

**Kathy:** It should be okay. [to Lily] Why isn’t your picture on here?

**Lily:** Uh, because I wasn’t on ‘til the third year.

**Kathy:** Third year. Okay.

**Nardwuar:** When you say the word “dick” on TV, you end up in the *New York Times*!

**Kathy:** That’s true, and also worldwide.

**Nardwuar:** But actually, Kathy, you end up on the *New York Times* business section. Is that the ultimate d-list? Like, “I made it! I’m on the front page... No, I’m on the business section of the *New York Times*”?

**Kathy:** I’m happy CNN got fantastic ratings.

**Nardwuar:** You like punk rockers, don’t you, Lily Tomlin? ‘Cause you actually played a punk rocker, Agnes Angst, didn’t you?

**Lily:** Yes, I did. But I’m not one.

**Kathy:** [laughs]

**Tom the Tour Manager:** Nardwuar, you got two minutes left!

**Nardwuar:** Okay, is this dirty right here? [Nardwuar pulls out a DVD sealed in a plastic bag] The Kim Kardashian DVD. Is this dirty? Notice I put it in a bag.

**Kathy:** Okay, yes.

**Lily:** [laughs]

**Kathy:** Kim Kardashian should be in a plastic bag. I don’t mean her body. I mean just her work.

**Lily:** Oh. But not her head.

**Kathy:** Well, I don’t want to catch anything.

**Nardwuar:** And you’ve talked about these types of things, haven’t you, too, Lily? Like *Hamburger Helper* in the bedroom. You’ve talked about that.

**Lily:** Yeah, *Hamburger Helper* in the boudoir.

**Nardwuar:** Lastly here, Carrie Fisher, you know, Princess...

**Kathy:** Leia.

**Nardwuar:** Princess Leia, she claims her dad Eddie...

**Lily:** Fisher.

**Nardwuar:** Ate his hearing aid, thinking it was pills.

**Kathy:** Sounds good to me.

**Nardwuar:** Could that happen? Is that one of the weirder Hollywood things you’ve heard, Lily?

**Lily:** I don’t believe it’s true.

**Kathy:** I said,  
“I don’t go to your jobs  
and knock the dicks out  
of your mouth.”

**Nardwuar:** Lily,  
you know a lot about  
dicks, don’t you?

**Lily:**  
Quite a bit.

**Nardwuar:** It sounds really good, though. I wanna believe it.

**Kathy:** It would be fun if it was true.

**Lily:** Something Carrie would make up.

**Kathy:** [laughs]

**Lily:** Alright, now I have Eddie Fisher’s, uh, autograph. So, put that in your...

**Kathy:** Pipe and smoke it.

**Lily:** Crotch.

**Nardwuar:** To remember me in Canada, we have a parting gift. As I gave Lily the soundtrack to the movie...

**Lily:** *Nashville*.

**Nardwuar:** *Nashville*, by some Canadian artists, I thought I would give you a gift of me, Kathy Griffin. My stripping pen. [Nardwuar hands a “floaty” pen to Kathy] This is me stripping.

**Lily:** No, no, I want one.

**Kathy:** Alright, this is my gift to Lily Tomlin.

**Nardwuar:** But you didn’t even look at it strip!

**Kathy:** I don’t. When Lily, uh, wants something, I give it to her. I don’t have...

**Nardwuar:** Is that really how... Well, actually, you’ve been on quite a few shows with Lily, or have you? Is this the first time you...

**Lily:** [looking at the Nardwuar “floaty” pen] This is like a partial strip.

**Kathy:** [To tour manager] Tom, you have to just take him (Nardwuar) away at some point.

**Nardwuar:** Well, thank you very much. Really appreciate the time. Anything else you wanna add to the world out there at all, Kathy Griffin?

**Kathy:** Yes, I’m bouncing you from your own interview.

**Nardwuar:** Well, thanks so much Kathy Griffin, and Lily Tomlin. Keep on rockin’ in the free world, and doot doola doot doo...

**Kathy and Lily:** Doo doot.

Too see and hear this interview, visit  
[www.nardwuar.com](http://www.nardwuar.com)



RAZORCAKE 27





## SQUEEZE MY HORN GARY HORNBERGER

**"Set some rules and then stick to them."**

# Golf's Lethal Ingredient

With the lack of integrity in sports lately, I figured golf would be the one sport to hold up. Baseball has its steroid problem; football has its dog fighting, kidnapping, and drunk driving; and basketball has its social ties to gang affiliations. Golf should be the shining example of sports royalty, right? Many things have transpired recently to make me think otherwise. I realize that throughout its history, golf has been spotty. It has had its problems with race relations (then again, which sport hasn't?) I also know it was a sport for the highbrow. If you didn't have social standing or wealth, you were kicked to the curb. Hell, Augusta, the site of the Master's, still likes to exclude women golfers. Certain golf analysts accuse Augusta's greens of being too fast with the help of bikini wax. Here in California, it seems anyone can play golf because we have many courses that will cater to the beginner and low income golfer, although they are becoming endangered.

Golf is not a team sport. It is an individual sport and it requires one to work hard to succeed. Steroids won't really help you here. Being bulked doesn't really help with the swing, and if you get 'roid rage and snap your cool, it's all over. I've always marveled at how golfers can hit a straight shot between crowds of people. If it were me, I'm sure I would send three or four people to the hospital with a new dimple tattoo. A big part of the integrity in golf lies in the most complex set of rules to ever be written for a sport, and if you've ever hit a golf ball, you know the unpredictability of where that tiny white ball can end up or disappear to. I'm guessing that's why the rule book is so lengthy. They could probably halve the thing if they cut the grass to the same level all around, and took out trees, sand, and water.

Golf, being the strange sport that it is, also has the distinction of bending rules for amateurs. At the beginning of any casual round, the group can set odd exceptions to stated rules. One of these, the Mulligan, is frequently used/abused during most rounds. The Mulligan allows one to disregard a bad shot and replay it with what usually ends up being a great shot, reducing the score by several shots. As one can see, for those with little conscience, slightly tweaking rules can make the game more pleasurable. I have played under these rules but, by the end of the round, I feel that I can't post the score into the computer. The Mulligan is usually used on

the drive, although I play with one character who will use it anywhere—including the putting green—without remorse.

There are also some unwritten rules in golf that are pretty much golden. The hole in one is probably the most well known, since they are rare but costly. See, if someone gets a hole in one that said person has the obligation to buy a round of drinks for the attesting group. That group can be large if one is in a tournament, which is why some courses actually offer hole-in-one insurance to save some guys big bucks. Recently in a tournament, I witnessed the hole-in-one magic. This is where the rules get tainted. After seeing that this guy scored an ace on the closest to the pin card, I knew I had at least scored a frosty free drink for my mismanagement of the course. When we got to the club house, we went straight to the pub and awaited the lucky bastard who scored the ace. He was nowhere to be found so we ordered a pitcher and waited for our food. About twenty minutes later the guy waltzes in, sits down, and says nothing. What the hell? This guy's going to stiff us all out of a drink? Where's the integrity for scoring an ace, which after twenty-five-some years, I still haven't accomplished. I'm unemployed and I still would have burst through the door, thrown my credit card on the bar, and claimed my rightful place in the ace club. So, what do you do when a guy's going to stiff you? You order a pitcher and tell the waitress to put it on the guy's tab, which is exactly what we did. The guy looked at us, scowled, and reluctantly pulled out his wallet. Beer never tasted so good! Oh, did I mention this guy's a dentist, could totally afford it, and his kid was with him? Way to be a good role model for following the rules. Now, needless to say, I may have hexed myself. The next day, on the first hole I slid into a plastic-lined pond all the way up to my thighs, but I did play better after that and won some money. Go figure!

I guess my big complaint is why can't anybody follow the rules and relay a positive moral compass for the rest of the borderline half wits who are running around out there? I play these sports for recreation now. I've already given up basketball because it's dangerous, and I don't have enough friends to play over the line, so please don't take golf away, too.

Set some rules and then stick to them.

## GHOST COMICS

A benefit anthology for RS Eden  
\$10.00 U.S.

By Various writers

Twenty-nine writers, all writing about those scary and not-so-scary life after death spirits we call ghosts. This collection is the perfect read for a cold Fall day in the month of October. Many of the stories come off as tales that entice you to really think and some are written to just make you feel better about what will happen when that fateful day arrives. Some of the stories don't involve ghosts at all, just that eerie feeling one gets, like a sixth sense. Like all anthologies, it's a sampler. Some stories and art hit hard and drive you into a strange excitement, while others you just flip through, but this book is full of the wonders of how everyone interprets the afterlife—slightly different but, at the same time, universally the same. My favorite story is on page forty-three and is a tale of Japanese kids and the ghost liar. Ghost Comics is a wonderful collection of the fears and the understanding of the finality of life. Some of the stories inside this anthology can make people a little more comfortable with this topic; if not in some cases, laugh at it. (Bare Bones Press, edsdeadbody.com)

## THUMBS DOWN COMICS

1&4, \$ ??

By Joey Huels

This is one of the most crudely drawn comics I have ever seen. These two books are like a sexual creep's pickup manual. The play on words is very juvenile and, with the drawings to back it, I could almost swear this comic is being created from a jail cell. Some of the writing stirs laughter, but for the most part, I feel like I'm reading the creation of a ten-year-old with a sailor's mouth, which, in and of itself, is kind of funny. I'm just not sure how to grade this or who this writer is going to market this book to. Good luck! (Joey. thumbsdown@gmail.com)

## THE LIMITED AND VERY RARE NOAH VAN SCIVER MINI COMIC

\$ ??

By Noah Van Sciver

The disciple of R. Crumb has come and he's drawing this book. It seems to me that when someone wants to portray the lower, dummied-up members of society they always



BILL PINKEL

For those with little conscience,  
slightly tweaking rules can make  
the game more pleasurable.

seem to be portrayed in this medium. This is a story of some liquored-up fool who, in looking for his way home to his cardboard box, stumbles into a nightclub and proceeds to vomit directly into patrons' mouths. Sounds like exciting reading, right? In a way, it's a rough look at how our underbelly society operates and, if people can find humor in that, then this is the book for them. (noahvansciver.com)

### THE LOVE SONG OF KERMIT THE FROG

\$2.00 U.S.

By Ed Choy Moorman

Who would ever have thought that Jim Henson's life would be accounted for in a comic book? Makes perfect sense to me and it is done in such a well-drawn medium. I almost felt like I was reading a historical text. I was not a big Muppets fan, but I do realize this man touched many with his work and still does, so it makes sense that his

works be documented. This is a fascinating, short look at his life. Very nicely done! (Bare Bones Press, 101 E.25 St, MPLS, MN 55404, edsdeadbody.com)

### A STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND SUN DOGS \$ ??

By Adam Pasion

I love this comic! Following this guy around Japan on a daily basis is great fun. It's like taking a trip with a friend to guide you. More than any other character I've seen in print before, this guy consumes more food that I can't pronounce nor care to know about. It is very interesting seeing how the family unit survives in a foreign land. It is also fun to watch as one portion of life starts to disappear and another is realized during his walk in the park with his son and their crossing paths with some punks, of which he explains a fleeting kinship. This book is a great read for the curious traveler. (Adam Pasion, 1-42

Namiuchi-cho, Kita-Ku Nagoya, Aichi 462-0041, Japan, biguglyrobot@gmail.com)

### DARK CLOUD COMIN

\$3.00 U.S.

By Ed Choy Moorman

This book is a wonderful story of loss and triumph. I loved this book. The story is a wonderful adventure of a little girl who is seeking her brother in the belly of a giant. She slays the giant and befriends a talking frog. I know it sounds like a child's book, but it is written in a way that will appeal to adults. There are characters that are evil and there are characters that portray the goodness in people. The visuals are very eye catching and allow for flow in the pages. I'm hoping this story will continue and there will be books to follow this one, because the story is that good. (Bare Bones Press, 101 E.25 St, MPLS, MN 55404)

-Gary





## A MONKEY TO RIDE THE DOG

SEAN CARSWELL

**“Intercourse, Pennsylvania may have been fun.”**

# EVERYTHING WAS CRUMMY, EVEN THE WONDERBREAD

The guys who live downstairs are on the front lawn, beating each other with sticks. Well, not sticks, exactly. They have what looks to be 1½ inch PVC pipes, about four feet long. They’ve wrapped duct tape around the pipes and fashioned them into crude weapons like the ones Ed Wood would use if he were making a martial arts movie. Now, they’re doing battle. Sometimes one v. one. Sometimes two v. one, but the two is shifting so that they’ll gang up on one guy. Then, without warning, half the gang will attack his partner. They’re laughing. Don’t let that fact suggest they’re not hitting each other hard. Skin will bruise. Welts will rise.

This may seem ridiculous to you: to spend a Saturday afternoon on the front lawn, beating your friend with a pole while he beats you. Perhaps you think it’s vaguely sexual. I assure you it’s not. And the activity makes perfect sense to me. After all, I’m sitting here watching them. Whatever judgment you place on guys beating each other with poles, that judgment has to carry over to the guy watching them. So who am I to speak?

Besides, we’re in Indiana, Pennsylvania in the summer time. I’ve spent a total of thirty weeks here over the past three summers. That’s how I explain being entertained by guys beating each other with poles in the front lawn.

My time here is at its end, and it occurs to me that you, *Razorcake* reader, may find yourself here one day. If that is the case, and if you don’t have any Ed Wood martial artists to perform for you, here’s my list of the top ten things to do in Indiana, PA.

### 10. Talk about Indiana

Explain to people that there is a town in Pennsylvania named Indiana. It’s an incredibly difficult concept for people to grasp. I’m not sure why it’s so difficult to grasp, but I have spent an amazing amount of time explaining to people that the town of Indiana is *not* in the state of Indiana, and I have seen them become very confused. Intelligent people. Perhaps you.

I’m so glad I didn’t spend the past three summers in California,

Pennsylvania. Intercourse, Pennsylvania may have been fun. Better than beating a guy with a pole, anyway.

### 9. Ride Your Bike

This used to be coal country. All the towns around here were once connected by a railroad. Many of the old railroad tracks have been converted into bike paths, and you can ride for hundreds of miles around Western PA. You can see old coal furnaces and the mouth of a coal mine that has been covered by a granite memorial to the miners. All kinds of deer, groundhogs, chipmunks, and rabbits will flee from you as you ride around. It’s actually pretty fun. But I better stop talking about it before Maddy Tight Pants makes fun of me for being a zinester writing about riding his bike.

### 8. Drink Dollar Yeunglings

It’s true. They still have dollar drafts of good beer. Drink two of them. They’ll be great. Don’t make the mistake of ordering a third dollar Yeungling, though. Halfway through it, it’ll occur to you that you’re just sitting in Indiana, PA, swilling beer. You’ll think about all of the places where you’d rather be drinking. Depression will set in.

Besides, all of the girls who hang out in the bar that serves dollar drafts wear low cut shirts and bras two sizes too small. Their breasts look like they’re propped up on a shelf. It’s far more strange than sexy.

### 7. Go to Backstreet Records

It’s mostly metal or mainstream music, but at least the “Backstreet” in the name refers to its location in the smallest indoor mall you can imagine (three stores and a buffet) and not to a nineties boy band. If you comb through the racks long enough, not only will you find a few good punk rock records, but you’ll also be able to witness a rotating cast of locals who perch themselves on stools and listen to the record store clerk broadcast his plans to be the first to eat three gigantic sandwiches at Samiches in an hour. These sandwiches will have french fries and coleslaw on them already. Three of them would weigh nearly four pounds, total. Maybe his picture won’t be on the

Samiches Wall of Fame the next time you go in there, but rest assured, he’ll get the better of those sandwiches sooner or later.

### 6. Count the Tanning Salons

I don’t want to spoil it for you, but there are seven within six blocks of here. I should say “only seven,” because last summer there were eight. Alas, this poor economy took down one. You’ll be heartened to know that the other seven seem to be thriving. Before long, you’ll recognize the look of someone who tans. The skin on the back of her knee will have the same rich, orange hue of the skin on her forearm.

I didn’t understand it until I got to know a nice, orange girl. I asked her if she tanned (because I’d been in Indiana long enough to know that “tan” can be a verb). She admitted that she did. I asked her why. She said, “I think it looks cool.”

Fair enough.

### 5. Walk around Town Listening to Music

You can literally walk from one end of town to the other, and still have the better part of the afternoon to do it again, three or four times. The walking won’t be that great, but at least you can listen to Dead Landlord, The Shorebirds, Banner Pilot, Something Fierce, or any other great new album that we cover in *Razorcake* and rest assured that you’re the only person within fifty miles who has even heard of these bands or *Razorcake*. But be careful. If you spend too much time walking around within the confines of this town with nothing but the music and thoughts in your head, you can have a horrifying moment when you feel like this is the whole world: a land-grant university and ancient brick houses that look like they’re one snowstorm away from caving in on the undergrads partying inside and a parking lot and a tanning salon. Just then, the Chinese Telephone song “Keep Smiling” will come onto your mp3 player. Keep smiling. No one can help you now.

### 4. Do a Reading at Common Place

Unlike readings in big cities, where people have a million other ways to entertain



# STARBUCK.

## IT'S AMAZING THAT SUCH A COOL CHARACTER COULD BE THE NAMESAKE FOR A DOUCHEBAG COFFEE SHOP.

BRAD BESHAW

themselves, readings in small towns can be packed affairs. The Common Place readings typically pack in twenty-five or thirty people who just can't beat each other with poles any more. It's usually a good time for everyone. It usually ends with dollar drafts and boobs on a shelf downtown.

### 3. Read *Moby-Dick*

Again, it's better than getting beaten with a pole. And the amazing thing about being in Indiana, PA, is that you can sit down, read for six hours, get sick of reading, go out and do everything there is to do in town, and have eight or so hours left in the day to read. There's no better situation for tackling *Moby-Dick*. It's a great book. And, if you do read it, you'll know first hand that Starbuck

was the Quaker first mate of the *Pequod*. He was known for his restraint, piety, and good sense. He's a really likeable character. And he doesn't drink any coffee at all. It's amazing that such a cool character could be the namesake for a douchebag coffee shop.

Also, you'll learn that Captain Ahab, who you've probably heard about as this great, macho hero, who your high school teacher probably told you was Everyman or something, was gay as hell. I don't mean that as a slight. I mean that he had intercourse with men. Read Chapter 127 and tell me Ahab's not sodomizing the cabin boy. What else could he mean when he says, "I do suck the most wonderful philosophies from thee! Some unknown conduits from the unknown worlds must empty into thee!"

Actually, don't stop at *Moby-Dick*. You have thirty weeks to kill. You might as well read about a hundred and fifty other books while you're at it.

### 2. Work on a Ph.D.

That's what I did. There's actually a really good university in Indiana, PA, and they have summer classes. You keep your job during the school year and take classes in summer school.

### 1. Sal Si Puedes

Seriously. If you find yourself in Indiana, PA, take Cesar Chavez's advice. Get out if you can.

—Sean Carswell

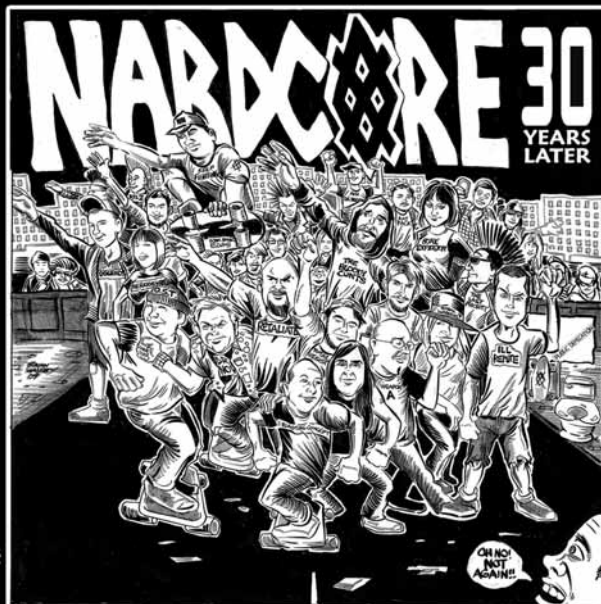




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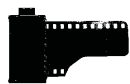
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## Dan Monick's Photo Page

Hope everyone had a good summer.



# tiltWHEEL

PART III

INTERVIEW BY TODD TAYLOR

PHOTOS BY TODD TAYLOR, SHANTY CHERYL  
AND JIMMY ALVARADO

LAYOUT BY LAUREN MEASURE

**H**ere is the final installment of the Tiltwheel interview trilogy. In this episode, we discover that Davey Quinn is really Paul Trash's father. Nah, just fuckin' with you. In this episode, we find out that Tiltwheel negotiated the Louisiana Purchase, invented the machine that slices bread, have one leg each filled with beer, and have perfected controlled nuclear explosions in a safe method that enables their tour van to get one thousand miles to the gallon. Nah, still fuckin' with you.

To the casual observer, it may appear Tiltwheel's long hiatus from releasing a full-length record has been stymied by Davey stuck in a dance that entails him wiggling his belly from side to side with a handle of booze in each hand and smiling, the truth is a little more twisted. Following two clown-free episodes, I sat down with Paul Trash and J. Wang, Tiltwheel's current drummer and bassist, respectively. Because of Tiltwheel, one of them uncomfortably lost his virginity in the shadow of creepy makeup and bicycle horn

squeaks. The other saw his entire industry destroyed by a small fish, the Delta smelt.

It is the best of times for music-before-money fans, because it is one of the worst of financial times in recent memory. There's less audio pollution. Gang-loads of bands looking to make a buck are now dissipated wisps of smoke. And Tiltwheel, these pioneers, are more than mere survivors. When the world crumbles around us, the most unlikely of bands—who've weathered storm after storm since formation, who are used to multiple flavors of chaos—soldier on with their best material to date.

Paul Trash: Drums  
J. Wang: Bass  
Davey Quinn: Guitar

[This interview begins in a bar. We quickly relocate when the noise increases. Paul Trash walks up.]

**Davey:** [Reading from Todd's notes] "Did Paul convince you to not bury Tiltwheel?" Oh, this is right after Jarrod. (See issue #51.)

**Paul:** No, I didn't have to convince you to not bury it. You weren't really thinking about ending it.

**Davey:** Yes I was.

**Paul:** You were just like, "Fuck it."

**Davey:** If one of us dies, it's over with.

**Paul:** I didn't have to convince you. "Hey, do you guys want to jam? Have some fun?"

**Davey:** Your honesty and you asking me was enough of a catalyst.

**Paul:** Would you call that convincing?

**Davey:** That's convincing because Bob and I fucked off after the funeral. We went and listened to Dillinger Four and drank a bottle of whiskey just before everybody showed up at the house. We didn't invite anybody, but it was a beautiful thing where everybody just showed up. Maybe it was a "Where's Bob and Davey?" type thing. And Bob and I looked at each other, "It's been fun."

**Paul:** I didn't know that at all.

**Davey:** And that's all it is. Nail in the fuckin' coffin. We had this total understanding in two seconds that the shit was over with. Two hours later, you pulled us outside and said, "Hey, I don't know if you're interested or anything like that, but I don't think you should break up or whatever you're thinking."

**Paul:** What I remember is that you were fucked up.

**Davey:** Fuck yeah, man.

**Paul:** I said, "If you guys want to get together and jam."

**Davey:** "If you didn't get it out of your system."

**Paul:** Cathartic.

**Davey:** Cathartic is a great word. That's like a catheter.

**Paul:** It's not like a catheter, actually, at all. But, the weird thing was that I remember



Davey in his banana costume at Punk Rock Bowling. He was almost arrested later that day in a case of mistaken identity.



**“HEY MAN, CAN I ASK YOU A QUESTION THAT’S KIND OF WEIRD?” FAT MIKE WAS LIKE, “WHAT, YOU WANT MY AUTOGRAPH OR SOMETHING?” AND I WAS LIKE, [DEADPAN] “NO, BUT DAVEY OVER THERE TOLD ME THAT IF I SLAPPED YOU IN THE FACE, HE’LL BUY ME A DRINK.”**

being at a party maybe two days later, and Bob was all, “Welcome to Shitwheel.”

**Davey:** Oh, he did? What an asshole.

**Paul:** I was, “Oh, okay. All right.”

**Davey:** [Reading Todd’s notes] “Paul was in a ska band. They were called the Hand Me Downs. Paul’s family also owns a dairy farm. Paul grew up working on the farm. So, you worked on a farm?”

**Paul:** [dismayed] Yeah. Where did you get this?

**Davey:** I think Jeff Proctor.

**Todd:** Research. I try to be thorough.

**Davey:** Look at this one: “Paul lost his virginity in Davey’s parents’ house.”

**Paul:** Yes. Okay. Yup. That’s not a question. I don’t have to answer that, right?

**Todd:** Well, how it usually goes is that I look at the notes, then formulate it in question form without the band reading it to one another. Here’s an example: “Has anybody commented that you’re looking more and more like Bob these days?”

**Paul:** One person comes to mind: Megan (Pants). She says that pretty frequently.

**Todd:** Where did your nickname “Boy Band” come from?

**Paul:** [Laughs] It was right after I joined Shitwheel. The very first tour I went on was with Grabass Charlestons, Billy Reese Peters, and The Tim Version. Bob couldn’t do the whole tour. He had to skip out on two shows, so I played drums instead of bass the last two shows. It was also because I had dyed black hair, and I used to use some products in it. Kind of a douchebag. Meeting those dudes for the first time, they didn’t know me at all. And I was a douchebag, but that’s what they

called me: “Boy Band.” This weird guy with hair gel who played bass and drums.

**Todd:** Is it true that you had to mow your lawn prior to going to Tiltwheel practice?

**Paul:** Yes, but I had to mow my parents’ lawn once a week, even if it didn’t need to be cut. Just so it looked nice.

**Todd:** Would they check out the wheel lines to make sure you did it?

**Paul:** Even if it was dead. Absolutely. I had to do it so there were lines in it. And if I didn’t do it, I had hell to pay.

**Todd:** What was the reprimanding?

[J. sits down next to us. Davey walks away.]

**J.:** His mom being pissed at him.

**Paul:** At this point, I was an adult, so they couldn’t actually ground me. But, they could yell at me.

**J.:** When you say “an adult,” what age?

**Paul:** Twenty, twenty-one. Very sad. I don’t want to go into that any more. They knew the most effective way to get at me for not doing it would be to yell at me in front of my friends. And, mind you, my friends were all older than me. I’m hanging out with people who are over thirty and my mom’s yelling at me for not mowing the lawn.

**Todd:** Was your family’s nickname for you “Pauly Wolly Toddle Butt”?

**Paul:** Yes. That’s what my parents called me when I was a little kid. I had a bunch of friends over. Like always, my parents wanted to embarrass me, and my mom called me that in front of everybody and they thought it was hilarious. Then the secret was out.

**Todd:** And when you started playing for Tiltwheel, you were also playing in another band called Slowfelt, correct?

**Paul:** Yes.

**Todd:** Why are you smiling when I say that?

**Paul:** Because all of my friends make fun of me for being in that band.

**J.:** I didn’t. I actually liked the band.

**Paul:** I did, too. It was a band I was in since I was fifteen years old. It was a really fun band. It was pretty much what taught me how to play in a band. I loved the band. It was a punk band. It ended up turning into an indie rock band. Most of my friends hated it. They just weren’t into it. That band was the butt of a lot of jokes. I’m that guy. My friends make fun of me all the time. That’s just part of it.

**Todd:** J., can you tell me how you became a member of Tiltwheel?

**J.:** For me, it was a long, drawn-out thing. I don’t think people wanted me to play in Tiltwheel. I personally didn’t want to play in Tiltwheel because I was such a huge fan. It kind of came down to, basically, Paul asked me to do it.

**Paul:** Yeah.

**Todd:** Was it basically because Bob sunsetted himself and Paul went from bass to drums?

**J.:** I think he wanted to do that.

**Paul:** No, I didn’t, actually.

**J.:** There was nobody else to play.

**Paul:** When Bob left, I wanted to keep playing bass. It was the first time I’d played a different instrument. I fuckin’ loved it. It was awesome.

**Todd:** A lot less to carry around.

**Paul:** Yeah. It was easier to do. It was fun. I was trying to think of different ways how we could go about keeping Tiltwheel going. There’s just a shortage of drummers around.



Tiltwheel with Paul on bass and Bob on drums, who Paul would replace.

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**J.:** The drummer situation in San Diego at that time was absolutely horrible. Davey was asking me about Gandhi (San Diego local) and stuff, and I'm just like, "Are you fucking out of your mind? The guy's insane." As much as Davey is insane, Gandhi is ten times worse. "Yeah, he's really good, but you're fuckin' nuts."

**Todd:** If you could keep some drummers in a cage for twenty-three-and-a-half hours a day and the only thing in life they had to do was play drums, their lives would be set.

**J.:** Paul's the most stable drummer I've ever known.

**Paul:** That's another thing. I was worried about—how well we'd get along with the next person who was in the band. As far as I know—me, Bob, and Davey—we got along really well. We didn't spar at all. I wanted to make sure whoever was in, was a good friend of ours. Somebody we'd already meshed with.

**J.:** Paul and I had already played in a band

together. Altaira. We already had a relationship.

**Paul:** I was in the last year-and-a-half of Altaira. I replaced Gandhi.

**J.:** Davey wouldn't ask me to do it, to play bass, because we were already playing in a band together (Dan Padilla). He didn't want me to join because of the exact thing that is going on now—Dan Padilla and Tiltwheel having so many of the same members, like Grabass Charlestons and Billy Reese Peters. But, it came to a point where Paul was, "Fuck that, dude. Will you please play bass?"

**Paul:** We had him and Josh Mosh in mind. We asked Josh Mosh first. He immediately said, "Fuck no. No way. Not doing it."

**J.:** Josh actually played, though.

**Paul:** He recorded "Skyway" with us. And J. said the same thing when I asked him the first time. "Fuck no."

**Todd:** You don't want to fuck it up. Understandable.

**J.:** You don't want to shit where you eat.

**Todd:** You don't want to become the new front man for Journey.

**J.:** Tiltwheel was such a huge part of my life. I felt like I was obligated to play in Tiltwheel, pretty much. Once Paul said, "Will you play bass?" I didn't want to see them try to go through some "band thing" with people who weren't in the scene. There was nobody else in San Diego.

**Paul:** It got to the point where it was either J., or we had to have a friend move here from out of town.

**J.:** That was actually an option, too. Derron Nuhfer, from Less Than Jake and the bass player for Gunmoll, was going to move to San Diego to play bass. I was working on that so I didn't have to play in Tiltwheel. That would have been perfect, too. Darren, musician-wise and drive-wise, he's a no-nonsense kind of guy.

**Paul:** That was very close to actually happening. That's what makes me think it would have been awesome if he did it, but a no-nonsense...

**Todd:** With Tiltwheel, you have to put up with a lot of nonsense.

**Paul:** That's what I mean. He would have probably been, "What the fuck are you guys doing?"

**J.:** Tiltwheel's—when you come into it—take all your shit, set it over here, and roll along with Davey.

**Todd:** There's a method to Davey, for sure.

**J.:** The more and more that you know him, it's insane. You'll be like, "Davey, you're so fuckin' full of shit." But there's no way of getting around how fuckin' creative and talented he is. You can say whatever you want about all that shit, but when it comes down to it, the dude writes the most fuckin' amazing songs. He's a really fuckin' talented guy. Paul and I are still blown away every time. "Call the Police," that song.

**Paul:** It's a minute and ten seconds.

**J.:** And it's fuckin' awesome, and I still don't know where it came from. All of sudden, at practice. [Snaps fingers] Like that. That's the kind of shit with Davey. The dude is a musical genius... who doesn't apply himself. He is a singer-songwriter. Let's not go too far into that kind of shit.

**Todd:** So, Paul, when you started drumming for Tiltwheel, did you realize how complicated a drummer Bob was?

**Paul:** Yeah. When I switched over to drums, I was playing old songs. We didn't have any new songs that I helped make at the time. I had to, for the most part, emulate what Bob did on *Hairbrained Scheme Addicts*. I didn't realize until then how detailed it was. There's a certain way he plays it that made it the way it was. He has a lot to do with how that record sounds.

**Todd:** Bob was never a flashy drummer. Not a stick twirler, or a dude with a huge kit. But it's kind of like watching skateboard tricks your brain can't comprehend, even though you're looking directly at him as he does it. "I have no idea what just happened, but that's impressive." Bob did that all the time.

**Paul:** That song “Rinse,” the drums on that, I still can’t really play it the same way he does. My initial goal was—for those songs on that record—was to play them exactly the way he played them.

**Todd:** How have your ethics been informed from being in a band? We don’t have to talk about the entire ethical structure. But, what’s one thing that resonates with you about your decision to be in a band, such as Tiltwheel, in comparison to any of the other bands you’ve been in or other bands you’ve been around?

**J.:** If you’re doing music because you love it, then you’re writing what you think is good music. If you’re doing it to “make it,” there’s no way to keep true to heart if you’re trying to get big. Because, if you’re trying to get big, you’re going on a path and writing what you think people are going to like. If you’re doing what you love, then whatever you write is what you write. I think that there’s a huge, huge value to that as opposed to a musician wanting people to like them. You’re not going to write the same music. If you’re writing and you don’t give a fuck—at all—about what anybody thinks and people still love it, that’s this whole thing in and of itself that only a specific amount of people are going to actually understand that it came from that. Other people will hear it in passing and be like, “That sounds like a song I heard on the radio,” or whatever, like a really good, poppy song. But I think a lot of people really, truly—especially Tiltwheel fans—respect that. Davey never, ever gave a fuck—ever—about exposure. The guy pretty much tries to fail and is still



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a huge success, in my eyes. As a musician, he’s very successful. He created this thing. He trips over it, and people fuckin’ love it. And that’s from the standpoint of me being a huge fan. It’s really cheesy to say it, but I’m a huge Tiltwheel fan.

**Paul:** I think in terms of band ethics, it’s the venues that we play. There’s a venue here called Soma that we won’t play. We all individually feel that way. We won’t play there because we don’t agree with how it’s run. The guy who owns it is a fuckin’ douchebag. And that place has been around since I was a little kid, fifteen,

sixteen. I used to go there and see shows. But that place also represents something we’re not a part of, too. Not just the owner. The venue represents bands that are trying to make it commercially. They have a side stage. If you sell enough tickets and make them enough money, then you get to be on the larger stage to open up for a bigger act.

**Todd:** It’s still pay to play.

**Paul:** Exactly. And we definitely don’t have anything to do with that. We don’t represent that type of thing. I’m sure Tiltwheel played there a long time ago before, before I was in

## PUNK ROCK BOWLING

**Todd:** Were either of you at punk rock bowling where someone ripped out the sit-down portion of a driving video game and was sitting on it in the throng of people?

**Paul:** Yeah. Ali. From what I remember, I think there was one guy who worked there and saw it happen who didn’t give a fuck, “Oh, that’s kind of funny. You guys are having fun, and you guys bring in a lot of people to this tournament.”

**J.:** I remember the biggest thing that I ever saw during any of the punk rock bowlings was a bowling ball actually shattering.

**Paul:** [To Todd] Dude, I think it was your ball, when I bowled one time and I was wasted. I overthrew it and it hit the door, broke the exit door, and went out into the parking lot. I don’t know if the ball was ever retrieved or not.

**Todd:** No, I still have that ball. I got it out of the parking lot. It looks like Barney Rubble’s ball. I was kind of pissed another time, but it was actually really brilliant. Someone had

gotten my ball and shoved a hot dog in one hole and the top and bottom of the bun in the two other holes, and then rolled it down the alley. It worked awesome because the hot dog smeared in the middle of the lane, so it was almost impossible to get a spare or a strike because the balls would be deflected by the debris. Boink. Right into the gutter.

**Paul:** I always think it’s funny that there are some people, who, when they’re registering and asked where they want to bowl, they answer, “I don’t care. As long as we’re not next to Tiltwheel.” One year, when we were bowling, we spilled beer on the lane where people were bowling. They were a tattoo shop. They fuckin’ flipped out on us. “Relax.” We cleaned it up. “It’s not that big of a deal.” It kept going on and on and on.

**J.:** Dudes who bowl every Wednesday.

**Todd:** With the bionic arm things.

**Paul:** And here’s me, just assuming that everyone else there—I guess it was naïve at the time—has the same mindset we do.



“Who gives a fuck? We’re just having fun.” But people take that tournament pretty fuckin’ seriously.

**Todd:** Both with the bowling and their personal selves. A lot of grooming. Paul, is it true that the first time you went to punk rock bowling, you didn’t come home on time and they filed a missing persons report?

**Paul:** That’s not entirely true. We were only a couple hours late and they had called the cops, but I was an adult... legally [laughs]. They couldn’t actually file a missing



# IT'S ACTUALLY THE BEST THING FOR HUMANKIND: WALKING TO THE STORE. IT'S THE FIRST STEP TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION WORKING.

the band, before they knew what was going on. I know for sure that they haven't played there in the past ten years.

**Todd:** What's one thing you guys are contentious with inside the band?

**J.:** Songwriting. Paul and I push for more songwriting, maybe. I think Davey fights it.

**Paul:** We'll say, "Let's make some more songs."

**J.:** We'll go to practice and start jamming on a song, and it's fuckin' amazing and we just stop.

**Paul:** Davey is his own worst critic. He's so harsh on himself.

**J.:** I think he's afraid to have a bad song.

**Paul:** We'll jam on something and J. and I think, "Wow, this is awesome," but Davey

will stop playing it, throw it out, and never jam on it again. If he cares about it, he'll keep playing it. He'll put his recorder on.

**J.:** As far as Davey, morally and ethically, if I've ever had an issue—"Hey, we're going to play a show at this place"—and I told Davey, "Well, dude, I have an issue with this band because," or "I have an issue with this venue because," he's like, "Okay." No questions asked. He's really fuckin' good about that kind of shit. He'll back you up.

**Todd:** A little bit on food ethics. J., you're a vegetarian?

**J.:** Yes.

**Todd:** But, you will eat the occasional whole sausage pizza? Please explain that.

**Paul:** Do you remember that? You were drunk.

**J.:** I've done that on many occasions. I'm a vegetarian because of me and not because of anybody else. My whole ethics behind it is that I believe that if I can live my life without taking life, then that's what I'll do. But I'm also human. I eat meat, probably, a couple times a year. On accident, or on purpose. Drunk at four AM and you order a pizza. You fuck up. It's got sausage on it.

**Paul:** Are you too tired to peel off all the pieces?

**J.:** Hey, what's the point of that? To me, there's no difference if you order a pizza and somebody fucks up: taking sausage off of it, or leaving it in a box and throwing it away.

**Todd:** Paul, I know you didn't want to talk about this earlier, but did you really lose your virginity in Davey's parents' "clown room"?

**Paul:** Yes, I did.

**J.:** Could you expand on that?

**Paul:** Well, Davey's parents were clowns for a pretty major circus. They had this

person's report, because I hadn't been missing for twenty-four hours. Nothing really happened, but my dad was still freaking out. So, when we did show up, he overreacted and he opened the door to the van and he told everyone to get the hell out of there because the cops were coming and everyone was going to get into trouble. It was really embarrassing for me.

**Todd:** So, did you slap Fat Mike to get a beer?

**Paul:** I'm glad this came up. At the first year I ever went to punk rock bowling, it was shortly after Jarrod died, so we were still emotional. It was five in the morning. We were at Binion's. Me and Davey were still up. We were fucking wasted. There's maybe like twenty, twenty-five people still up in that bar. One of them was Fat Mike. He was schmoozing with some other dudes. I was broke at that point, and I asked Davey, "Can you buy me a drink? I'm broke. I just want a Bloody Mary." He's all, "Yeah, dude. Just go slap Fat Mike in the face." And I'm wasted. I will slap that dude in the face, no problem. I walked up to Fat Mike. Don't get me wrong. I respect that dude, but he's kind of douchey sometimes. I said, "Hey man, can

I ask you a question that's kind of weird?" He was like, "What, you want my autograph or something?" And I was like, [deadpan] "No, but Davey over there told me that if I slapped you in the face, he'll buy me a drink. So, I don't want to actually slap you in face. Could I just act like I'm doing it, for presentation, so Davey thinks I did it and he'll buy me a drink? Act like I'm hitting you. You can move your head to the side and say 'Ow.' Then I get my drink and everybody wins." And he says, "No. Fuckin' hit me." I'm like, "Oh, I don't want to hit you." "Fuckin' do it. Fuckin' hit me." I go, "Okay," so I landed it on his face. Slapped him. And after I did it, he just kind of looked at me and said, "All right." I walked away. That was it. I walked back to Davey. He saw the whole thing. "Dude, I just slapped him in the face." And Davey's all, "I don't have any money."

**Todd:** Did the Stern brothers (who put on punk rock bowling) ever mete out any retribution to Tiltwheel for your behavior?

**Paul:** When we were on tour—this is Vena Cava and Tiltwheel. It was at the Triple Rock. And Youth Brigade—Youth Brigade didn't have any equipment because they were flying to other shows. They had a

rider. They specifically requested, "We want bottled Mexican beer." There's a little backstage room. We get there kinda early. Youth Brigade weren't at the venue yet. We walked back into the backstage area. They had a sign that said, "Youth Brigade's beer." So we were staring at it for awhile. "It looks good, but it's Youth Brigade's." All of sudden, we were like, "Fuck it, man." We started drinking it. Our friends from Minneapolis started going backstage, too. All of sudden, everyone's just partying. What Davey did in the middle of this, he took a sharpie and added, "Everybody drink" before "Youth Brigade's beer." They show up and by the time they were about to play, there was one beer left. I think the drummer got one beer while they were playing. They had to borrow our equipment, too.

**Todd:** "It's a rental fee." Did they take it okay?

**Paul:** I don't know. We didn't get last place at bowling that year. Although, I think we should of, so maybe they didn't take it very well.

room when they lived in Escondido, on Old Spanish Trail, that was an homage to clowns. I hate to say it, but it was creepy. Clowns. Everywhere. It was the room where, if I was hanging at the house and partying, there was a bed in there and that was the room I'd crash in because everyone had their own rooms. So, when I was twenty-two, I was kind of dating this girl and I was still a virgin because I grew up religious. That was the main reason I was still a virgin. I got wasted that night and kinda said, "Fuck it." And I went for it. I was way too drunk to actually do it, but I did it. It sucked. It sucked really badly. But I remember waking up in the morning and it hit me like a ton of bricks. "Holy shit. I lost my virginity." Then I looked around and I'm just surrounded in clown stuff. I flipped the fuck out. I had to run outside. "Fuck! Arrgh! Owwww!" It was really weird and kind of funny at the same time.

**Todd:** What did the lady think? Was she freaked out by the room?

**Paul:** I don't think she really cared that it was a clown room. She bailed shortly after. Dude, this is embarrassing. It was the kind of thing where it went on for awhile—because I was wasted—and she said one of those, "Are you done yet?" kind of things.

**Todd:** J., what do you do for a living?

**J.:** I am a professional land surveyor for a quasi state government agency.

**Todd:** Why "quasi"?

**J.:** Because it's a money-making company, but we have all the benefits of a government agency as far as state funding, benefits, and all that stuff.

**Todd:** You've gotten your accreditation?

**J.:** Yes. I am a professional.

**Todd:** So, how do you feel about urban sprawl?

**J.:** I think everybody understands it. Everyone's opinions of it are different.

**Todd:** Part of your job is surveying land.

**J.:** Grating and destroying stuff.

**Todd:** Is there no more land to survey if everything's bought up in the San Diego area? Or, such as the time we're in right now, when the grim economic situation has ceased expansion, does that jeopardize your job?

**J.:** Yeah. I changed jobs two years ago, and if I wouldn't have, I would be completely unemployed right now. My field is absolutely dead, especially in Southern California.

**Todd:** And your field was, specifically?

**J.:** Basically, civil engineering. The entire field is dead without growth. Number one, the economy, and number two, the Delta smelt (court ruling) thing and the water supply in Southern California. An environmental group—in the Sacramento River, there's the Delta smelt, which is a two-inch fish—said that the fish were being threatened from Northern California water pumps used to supply Southern California. So, it became a protected species (The fish became protected by a court order related to the State Water Project's pumping, which was threatening the fish's habitat.) because the salmon feed on the Delta smelt and



Razorcake's 50th Issue Anniversary party.

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the salmon go to the ocean, come back in, and then the orcas feed on them. So it's this huge, long cycle. Basically, it was an environmental thing, but it was pushed on by environmentalists for political reasons, for people who don't want development. It cut thirty percent of the water supply to Southern California, which, in turn, is causing tons of cutbacks. I don't know if it's right or wrong, but, basically, the civil engineering field in Southern California is completely kaput. Everybody I know that has the same career that I did, is out of work or are working ten to fifteen hours a week with half unemployment, half working just because people are being nice and trying to get through this.

Back to the urban sprawl thing; my personal opinion is I believe that cities should build up. I'm not opposed to the guy having a ranch and living on a ranch out in the country, but not when you're building ranch-style homes on an acre where there are a hundred of them and there are people driving fifty miles every day to work. It's just ethical things. A lot of people don't give a shit. People who have the same mindset as me, who see the developer and the city with multi-use shit, hear other people who really don't know what they're talking about. They say, "Oh, it's gentrification" and this and that. No, dude. These fuckin' assholes would have built houses thirty miles out and increased daily commutes. Build up. It's a great fuckin' thing. But a lot of people don't see it like that. They just see it as, "They're coming in and taking over our neighborhood, and they have this grandiose city development plan." It's actually the best thing for humankind: walking to the store. It's the first step to public transportation working.

**Paul:** That's the main reason why it sucks here. Our public transportation's fuckin' ridiculous.

**Todd:** I can understand why people don't trust their local government. I can only speak for my part of Los Angeles: corrupt, dubious, serving specialized interests, and giving away huge, no-bid contracts. Even dealing with something as tiny as a skatepark, I saw all these things right off the bat. You just hope your city founders are better than that. But it's such a hard reprogram because all of Southern California started with the idea of suburbs, whereas places like New York or Chicago are in much better positions because they started with a central core. It's coming to a very potent head right now.

**J.:** Along those lines, I'll just add that it's the same thing in politics as far as police—cops and shit. I really think that everybody who gets into it has the best intentions when they first get into it, but working for a government agency, it doesn't take long. After two or three years; that's just how everything's run. It's not so much that they think they're being corrupt. It's just translates into that.

**Todd:** It's the system. You're either going to wake up every day and fight it, or you're going to go along with it. And the people who seek those positions have the tendencies already to go along with other people. Otherwise, they would have stayed completely out of it. What about you, Paul? What do you do?

**Paul:** I actually just left my job of six years, doing a similar thing to what I'm doing now. I'm working for a small consulting firm and I do programming, web development, web design, and graphic design.

**Todd:** You went to that right out of college?

**Paul:** I have a BA in communications from Cal State San Marcos, but it has nothing to do with the career I'm in right now. It's kind of cool in that it was a broad major; it

# “HOLY SHIT. I LOST MY VIRGINITY.” WHEN I LOOKED AROUND AND I’M JUST SURROUNDED IN CLOWN STUFF. I FLIPPED THE FUCK OUT. I HAD TO RUN OUTSIDE. IT WAS REALLY WEIRD AND KIND OF FUNNY AT THE SAME TIME.

could apply to a lot of different things. The job I had for the last six years, I was working there while I was going to college. When I graduated, and got my degree, I was moved up. I got a better position there. But, I just quit about four weeks ago. Got a new job. The new job’s awesome.

**Todd:** Especially in a hard economy.

**Paul:** I was offered the job from a friend. Surprised by it. I wasn’t looking for it. I was thinking, “I don’t really like my job, but the economy’s in shambles right now. I’m not going to worry about finding another one.” It kind of presented itself.

**Todd:** J., you have a lot of different nicknames. When I first met you, you were “Tampa J.” and now I know you as “J. Wang.”

**J.:** It’s a long progression. It started off as “Florida J.,” from Dirty Dave and the whole Watch It Burn crew of people, and that turned into “Tampa J.” And then the “J. Wang” thing came from Jack Doyle (ex-Underground Railroad To Candyland). They were talking about Florida: “Florida, that’s America’s wang.” So I was called “Tampa Wang.” I was walking up to a big show at Buster Daily’s a long time ago and Led from Watch It Burn was standing there and he’s just like, “Tampa Wang, Tampa Wang.” That turned into a chant. Thirty people standing outside. “Tam!Pa!Wang! Tam!Pa!Wang!”

**Paul:** That went on for years. Pretty much every time everyone was together and J. was around.

**J.:** Then “Tampa J. Wang.”

**Todd:** Anybody mistake you for Asian because your name?

**J.:** A lot of people in the world of internet, I’m sure. Yeah.

**Paul:** Aren’t you friends with an actual J. Wang on MySpace?

**J.:** Yeah. There’s actually, like, five of ‘em.

**Todd:** J., can you recall the time you snuck into the new Padres ballpark? You, Danny from Japanese Monsters, Fernando from Bümkläätt...

**J.:** Oh, yeah. And Charlie. It was in the middle. God damn, dude. I don’t know how the fuck you know that one.

**Paul:** He didn’t barely remember.

**J.:** This was in the middle of the huge city debacle. There was tons of fucking corruption with the new ballpark and the city council members at the time. They had started building it and then stopped. It was probably about six years ago. There was a complete battle with attorneys and the city council. People got fired. All kinds of shit. The thing was under construction for over a year. Back then, that area had tons of homeless people living everywhere.

I think I actually went and saw Tiltwheel that night. We did the whole drunken thing, like, “Let’s go climb that crane!” Huge crane. And we go over there and find a spot in the fence where we can totally get in. We broke into the stadium. I think Charlie was the only one who had the balls. There was a trench around the crane. They drive the piles and then they do excavating around in it. It was probably thirty or forty feet down to where the base was. Ground level is much higher, and had this old, wood barricade that had been there for a year, with nobody working or anything. They had probably built some walkway across it to get over. Well, you could go and climb up to the wood thing, sit there, reach across, and grab

the crane, swing over to it, and then get on the ladder up the crane.

Well, we were all doing the thing where you were secure on your back leg and you could go over and grab the crane and be, “Okay, I’m going to do it. I’m going to do it.” But to actually take the step to go across, it was gnarly. It was a forty-foot drop if you fucked up. I was drunk as shit. I wouldn’t normally do something like that. I’m deathly afraid of heights. I couldn’t do it. My friend Charlie, at the time, was really psychologically fucked up. Kind of suicidal. He went all the way to the top of the crane. It turned into this whole ordeal. I wouldn’t say suicidal, but definitely fucked up... but it was awesome. A really good night.

**Todd:** So how did Fast Crowd Records come about?

**J.:** Josh Mosh and I had been talking about it for years before we ever did anything. At the end of Altaira, we started Dan Padilla: Gene (Doney) and me. We just jammed first. Then Davey. I kept writing songs that Altaira didn’t want to play. It was almost too much songwriting from me, which was understandable, because that was such a large songwriting band. So, I had all these songs that weren’t working and I’d wanted to jam with Gene forever. We started doing it. We’d become friends with the Chinese Telephones from touring and stuff. I was talking to Justin: “Hey, I’ve got a new band with my friend Gene and Davey and we’ve wanted to start a record label forever.” It just seemed like the perfect thing to do, and I love Chinese Telephones. At the time, right then, they’d put out a 7”. We just did it. It was the first step to learning how to do everything.





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SHANTY CHERYL

I talked to Russ from Tim Version, Dave Disorder from ADD Records, just asking them questions. Everybody I knew who did stuff: “How do I do this? How do I do that?” That record, we pressed 1,000 copies. The original pressing was 500. It went pretty fast, and I had no idea how to run a record label. This is just from not knowing anything, and, basically, bands that nobody knew. We repressed three or four times. I was just like, “Wow. Everything’s going well.” And then we put out the Fuckboyz CD. [Makes screeching brakes sound, then laughs.]

**Todd:** Great CD.

**J.:** But nobody knows who the Fuckboyz are. Whatever. That’s how it started. I’ve always wanted to be really scene oriented. It’s never quite been there, but that’s what it evolved from.

**Todd:** What does “Fast Crowd” mean?

**J.:** It was just like a joke term from a long time ago. I believe, again, it was Jack Doyle. I’m not certain.

**Todd:** He’s like the Yoda of naming stuff.

**J.:** I Googled it one time and it all came up with *Pretty in Pink* references. “Fast crowd” came from ‘50s terms of parents talking to kids: “That’s a fast crowd you’re running with.” That’s what it came from—an old term.

**Todd:** So, it’s not a gang?

**J.:** Not at all. It’s a joke. People in San Diego, I think, thought of it something like that, but they’re just fucking stupid. It totally

has nothing to do with anything at all. It’s just funny.

**Todd:** Tough subject to breach. When’s the full-length record coming out?

**Paul:** Honestly, if it was up to me, it would be out very soon. I’m pretty much happy with the way it is right now. There are a lot of mixed opinions between us about the mix. That’s basically what it’s boiling down to right now.

**Todd:** From the interview I did with Davey, he was so bummed with how the mix came out on *Hair Brained* that I think that’s part of his residual feelings. He wants to be able to listen to the new songs in a recorded format and not be sad about it.

**Paul:** Like I said before: He’s his own worst critic. I think he really wants this to be a good product. I think it is, but he’s so harsh on it. For me, I’m not too concerned about the overall production of it because it already sounds good to me and I think, in the rawest form, the songs were recorded and played well. I think, ultimately, that’s what people are going to pay attention to. That’s what I pay attention to. And I like how it turned out. I like how the songs are played.

**J.:** We recorded the entire thing live.

**Paul:** That’s how I always like to do it. It was recorded awhile ago now. I hope it comes out soon. I’d really like to get it done. I don’t know how it’s going to pan out. Everyone’s busy and we recorded it 3,000 miles away. Florida. It’s kind of hard to touch it up and do

any fixes to it because it’s got to be carried over the entire country. Davey’s actually had to fly back all the way to Florida, work on it, finish stuff up.

**J.:** We had it. Paul was happy with it. I was not happy with it at all. Then Davey went out early for our tour to mix with Frankie Stubbs (Leatherface). Fuckin’ night and day. Then Paul was really happy with it. It’s just that kind of thing where I can understand why Davey wants to take time. That mix was a huge difference. If that’s what it takes, that’s what it takes. I don’t want to have an opinion on it just because it was done so long ago. There’s an artistic-type thing. My personal opinion is that I’m really upset with how long it’s taken and I’m disappointed with us as a band for not being able to—it’s nobody’s fault—we all live within half a mile of each other and we can’t... I’m just really disappointed in us.

**Paul:** I’m afraid sometimes, especially with recordings, you get to a point where you start over analyzing. Then a lot of things that didn’t matter in the first place start becoming big problems. Then you start pointing out things and being pickier about other things. It turns into a huge fuckin’ ordeal. There are problems with the bass on it right now. Everyone wants to change how the bass sounds. But still, to me, I would put it out right now because I’m that happy with it. I love the way it is already and I don’t want to over-analyze it.



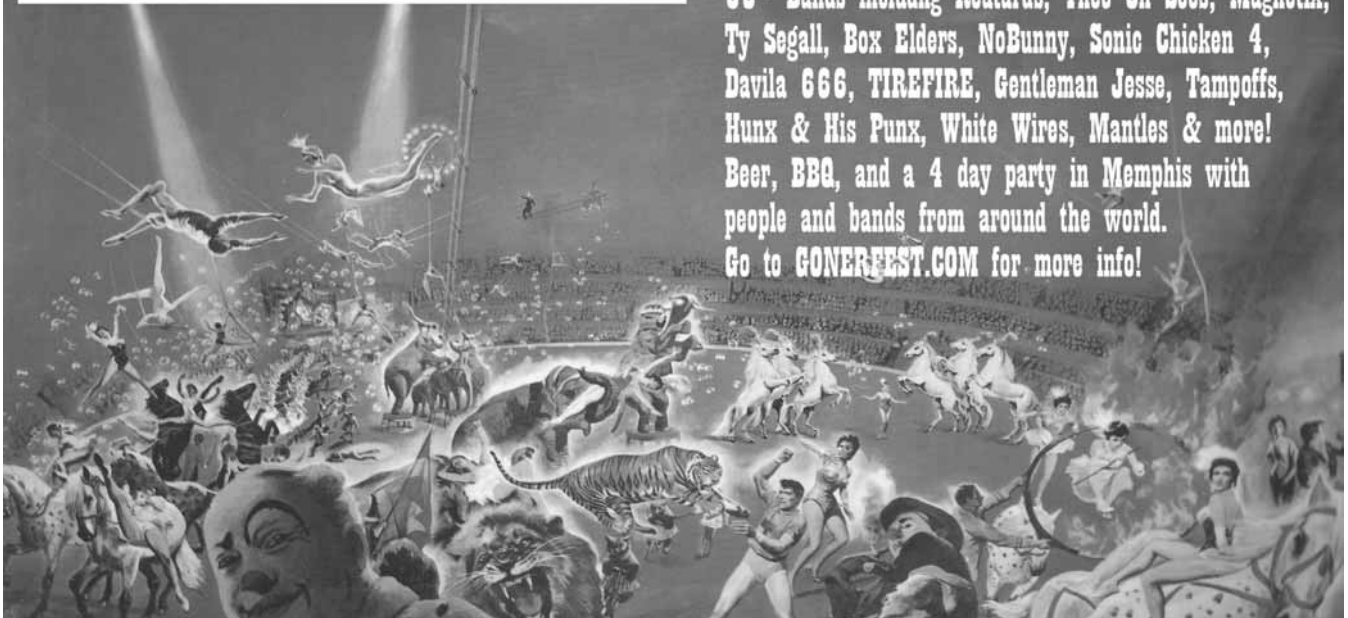
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**J.:** Sometimes you listen to it too much and then you just can't tell any more.

**Todd:** It's the same with writing and revisions. You read over the same mistakes, or you start resenting a piece because it's still there and unfinished.

**J.:** Exactly. I haven't listened to the record in over six months, because I was trying to analyze it for so long and pick out stuff. Now, it's just like, "Take a break from it."

**Paul:** We need to get off our asses, get together sober, discuss it, and actually fuckin' start doing something.

**J.:** It's just all mixing. I think a lot of it is, too, is us not wanting to push Davey because it's his creation. Just recording the thing was an effort for us.

**Paul:** It was J.'s idea to go out there to do it. It was awesome that we were able to go record with Derron, that guy we were talking about earlier. But, it ended up being the kind of thing where, "We're going to go to Florida for a week. Play some shows and record." The recording ended up only being for a weekend. We went into it knowing, "We've got to get a record done in two days." I think Davey has this fantasy of pretty much living in a studio for a couple of weeks and really delving into it. Having a good time. Living there. Not having to work. Creating this record that's really fun. In a perfect world that would be awesome, but we all have work. I think he was a little upset that we had to go in there and hammer it out. I think that really bummed him out.

**J.:** There were definitely some situations that evolved from that. It's not shown in the recording, because it was live. But, it was us being, "Hey, we've got to do this," and Davey not really understanding. Passed out from being drunk. I'm asking him about a guitar part. I fucked something up. I'd be like, "Davey, what are you playing here?" And he's asleep. "Davey!" He wakes up pissed off, "What the fuck?" I'm like, "We're in Florida, recording an album!" Then he yells at you for waking him up, during the middle of the day at two o'clock, recording an album.

**Paul:** He's in the control room, on the couch, asleep.

**J.:** "Don't fuckin' pull this shit on me!" "All right, dude. I'm just sayin'." It was tons of shit like that. That's an everlasting thing in Tiltwheel; that kind of thing, which is cool. It makes it part of what it is. Playing in the band, you gotta kinda just relax and go with it.

**Paul:** The only time that it gets really serious in this band is songwriting and recording the songs. Other than that, playing shows, nobody's like, "Don't get drunk. We gotta perform tonight." Never like that.

**Todd:** "Please don't throw up on me... directly."

**J.:** I'm really, really excited about it coming out. I think the songs are fuckin' great. I think, performance-wise, it's amazing. The entire thing was recorded live and we played it really well. We knew the songs. We actually practiced the album before



TODD TAYLOR

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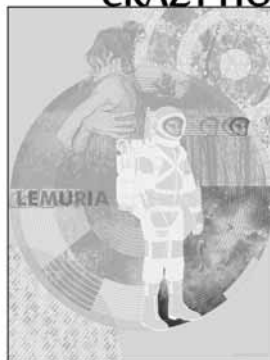
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we went. We played some live shows beforehand in Florida.

**Todd:** ADD's putting it out?

**Paul:** Don't know. We haven't really discussed it.

**J.:** Davey's the only one who's talked to... We have no idea. I'm pretty sure ADD's going to do something because Davey's been talking to Dave. Nobody's really talked about that at all, as a band. It's the same thing as talking to Davey about anything. I don't think Paul and I really have a say about it whatsoever, which is fine with me. Fast Crowd could put it out, but I don't think I could do it justice as far as being a label.

**Todd:** Paul, what's one thing that's been surprising about J. Wang that you didn't expect when you first start playing music together? Like, he's really good at yo-yos or he does math really well in his head...

**Paul:** He's more proactive with the band than I am. He's out there booking shows, getting stuff done, planning tours. Stuff like that. And he stepped right into that, which is awesome because when it comes to that kind of shit, I hate it, avoid it. Sometimes Davey kinda gets out of the loop, and he doesn't want to deal with it. So, J.'s done a lot of cool shit. That's pretty awesome. It kinda keeps us afloat.

**Todd:** And keeping you on the radar. It's always good to let people know you're not dead.

**Paul:** He's done a lot of things for our releases. We've had a lot of opportunities to put splits out with other people. We put out a lot of 7"s in 2007 and a lot of those were J.'s idea.

**J.:** I think that kicked off songwriting again. Just putting stuff out. "What are we going to do next?"

**Paul:** When he joined the band, at first, I felt he was like, "Okay, well, I'll join. I'll do what you tell me."

**Todd:** He'll be like the dude from Suicidal Tendencies joining Metallica. "I'll just be in this corner over here. Feel free to whip me."

**Paul:** That's kinda what I thought it was going to be like. But, then he started taking charge. It's awesome.

**Todd:** All right, J. Your turn.

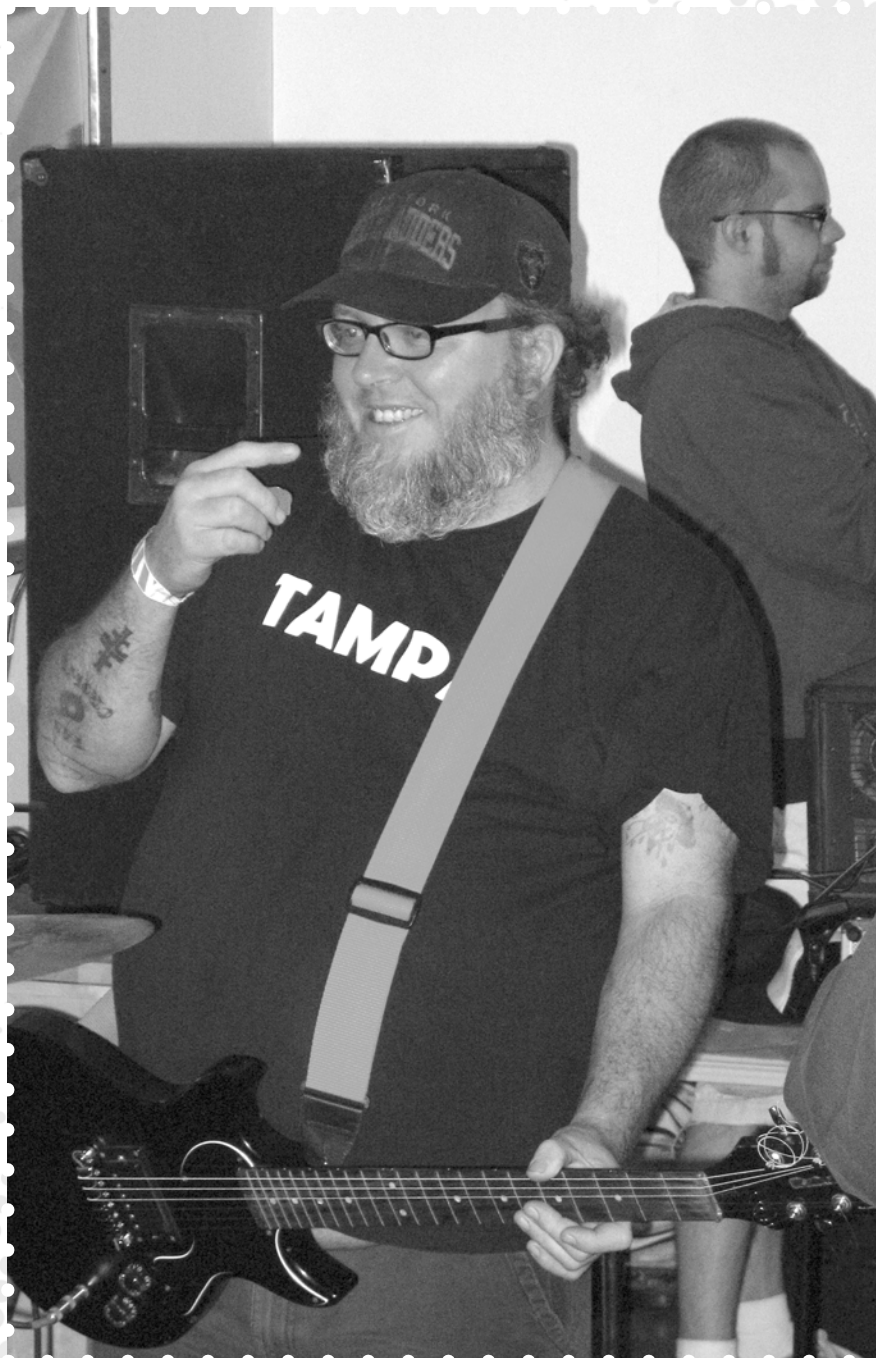
**J.:** I've known Paul for such a long time. We've never had any issues besides stupid things. He's one of my best friends. He wrote the bass parts. It's the exact same thing Paul was talking about Bob. A lot of this stuff can't be reproduced. Everybody has their own style. I think that was really hard for him to deal with for a long time—that I couldn't play stuff that he wrote. Everyone has their own style. You can't imitate somebody's songwriting exactly.

**Todd:** It's like fingerprints.

**J.:** Exactly.

**Paul:** I didn't realize that at the time. I think I was a little bummed that I wasn't able to play bass anymore, too. I think that was the last thing I was holding onto: making sure that the songs were still played in the exact way they were created.

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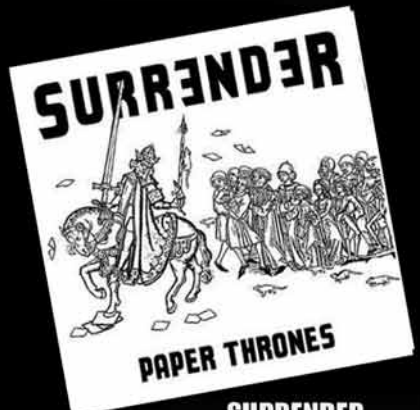
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**J.:** That's really, really difficult stuff to play. I'm not a great musician at all. Somebody's style—you can cover somebody's song all you want. There will always be something there that's not there from the original person who wrote it. I was really surprised of technicalities in a lot of the songs that I kind of picked up after Paul moved to bass. That was a huge thing. All the songs we recorded within the last few years, there's about six songs that Paul and Davey went and actually demo'd for me in the studio where Paul played drums and bass. Just to teach me the songs. All the new stuff. I'm like, "Fuck. That's pretty cool."

**Todd:** So... why do you do it? Why play in Tiltwheel? Paul, you stopped doing all of your other bands.

**Paul:** It wasn't like I stopped doing them. A lot of those bands just died. If they hadn't, I'd still be playing in them. I miss the shit out of Altaira. I loved playing in that band. I miss playing in the Phuzz, too. I still want to play in more. From when I was ten or eleven years old, music was the first thing I latched onto. It was the only thing that I was really good at. I did okay in school. I know some computer stuff. Other than that, the only thing I'm really good at is playing music. It's the

only thing I'm confident about. I love playing music. I kinda have to do it. There have been times when I don't do it for awhile, and it gets to me. It's just another outlet for me to, I dunno, express myself. It sounds kinda lame. It's fun as hell, too. Especially going on trips, traveling, playing awesome shows. That's another reason why I like this band, too, because it's not like a job like some other bands are. It's not that serious, it's just fuckin' fun. I loved the band before I was in it, so I'm just totally stoked to play in it.

**J.:** I agree. Music's the only thing that's been constant in my life since I was young. It seems like our scene is such a nice thing. It seems like it's always there. No matter what else happens, if it's Tiltwheel or another band that you like, it's just something that's there to enjoy.

**Todd:** We've been through so many waves of music coming and going that you have confidence...

**J.:** ...that it'll come back. Even when it's small, it's still great. It's such a weird scene, too. It creates such great friendships with such a broad mind-span of people.

**Todd:** A broad geography, too.

**Paul:** The majority of the friends I have in this city or anywhere else, I would

say ninety-nine percent of them, I've met because of playing in bands. It's all music. Even friendships that I have now that don't have anything to do with music anymore, they were friendships that started with music.

**J.:** It's really weird, too, if you meet somebody, who's cool, who's outside of the scene. "This person's great." Man, I really hit it off. Then you find out that they don't understand anything about music, or even have an appreciation of it. It's so weird, like meeting someone at work and they tell you how they followed the Dead for a year.

**Paul:** Or they just don't pay attention to music. I have met some people where music's not anything to them. Turn on the radio; they don't care about it at all. They don't buy records or CDs. I don't understand that. I never will. Music's such a big deal to me. It's something I talk about all the time. It's something I think about all the time. I couldn't imagine music just being something just in the background.

# 16

**H**eavy and pummeling. 16, from Orange County and going on sixteen years of existence, are masters at writing some incredibly heavy riffs that are truly brutal. From day one, with their *Doorprize* double 7", to their most recent release, *Bridges to Burn*, they have delivered in spades. Low end for days; thick, distorted guitar sound; jaw-dropping drumming; and some truly pissed-off vocals that let loose on a world of betrayal, despair—and darker aspects of life—and the emotional and physical ugliness of humanity.

As I type this intro, I'm listening to the previously mentioned *Bridges to Burn* LP. Without a doubt, it's their best yet. If you thought *Drop Out* cranked, then you need to listen to this. Songs like "Throw in the Towel," "Skin & Bones," "Flake," and the rest are total killers. Sure to be in many folks' top ten lists of 2009.

The first time I witnessed these guys live was at Gilman St. sometime back in the early to mid '90s. I have no idea who else was on the bill. I figure if you can't remember that sort of stuff, then the other bands were pretty insignificant in the grand scheme of things. All I know is 16 destroyed that night.

They recently started playing live again. I caught them around December of last year at the Relax Bar, and they completely blew my mind once again. To still have that sort of sonic power over a decade later, I figured it was time to get their story.

**Interview by Matt Average**  
**Photos from Donofthedeat and Matt Average**  
**Chris Jerue—vocals**  
**Bobby Ferry—guitar**  
**Tony Baumeister—bass**  
**Jason Corley—drums**

**M.Avr:** You guys have been a band for sixteen years. How does that work out?

**Jason:** Slowly. What do you mean, "How does it work out?"

**M.Avr:** Most bands from that time period when you guys started have all dissolved...

**Bobby:** We were broken up for a while.

**Tony:** There was a lull in 2003.

**Chris:** Technically, it's like sixteen years or whatever, but there was four years where we weren't doing anything.

**M.Avr:** You (Chris) were the one consistent member. Then you left in 2003. Then there were three guys who carried on who were not original members.

**Bobby:** There were two tours that were already booked, and they didn't want to cancel them, so Phil, the guitar player, just did the vocals himself.

**Chris:** We were set to go to Japan and around the United States when I quit, so I think they just kind of wanted to go.

**M.Avr:** Why did you quit the first time around?

**Chris:** I had some personal problems I was going through, related to substance abuse, and I can't really do one without the other when it comes to making music. So I had to quit, and 16 was not really any fun anymore. All my friends were gone, and it had just been patched together so many times. I was just kind of burned out. It was going nowhere...

**Jason:** It lost the magic.

**Chris:** Yeah, I kept my hopes up. I kept trying to keep the dream alive of trying to make it bigger than some shitty band. It becomes repetitious when you keep doing

it for nobody. It kind of beats down on you after a while.

**M.Avr:** Why did you guys quit, as well?

**Bobby:** I got some stupid job that didn't even work out, and it was like 150 miles away. Also, I did the band for so long, like I like to say, we ate sand for a long time. It builds character.

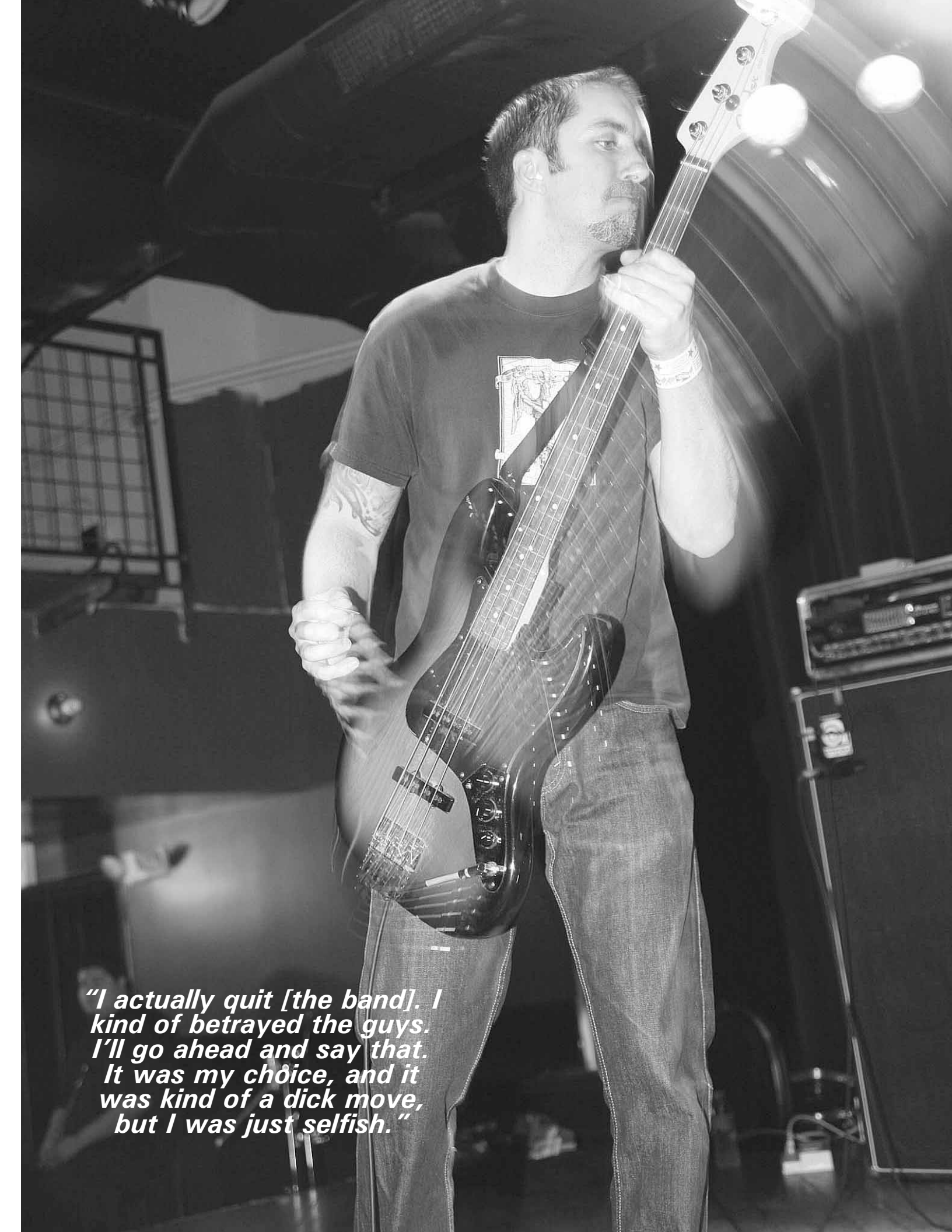
**Jason:** I didn't quit. I was fired!

**M.Avr:** Really?

**Jason:** But that was a long time ago.

**Tony:** I actually quit, because, at the time, it was kind of going nowhere, and Chris Spencer from Unsane asked me to try out for his other band, The Cutthroats 9. So I did that. And I knew they were going on tour with High On Fire right away. So I had the opportunity to do that. I kind of betrayed the guys. I'll go ahead and say that. It was my choice, and it was kind of a dick move, but I was just selfish. But it's better than not going! [laughter] At the same time, I had a great time, but it didn't end up lasting for very long.





*"I actually quit [the band]. I kind of betrayed the guys. I'll go ahead and say that. It was my choice, and it was kind of a dick move, but I was just selfish."*



**Q:** You looked totally different [in '93 or '94]. You looked like Southern California skater dudes. Then I see you at the Relax Bar, and I was like, "Is this the same band?"

**Chris:** Life has not been good to us at all.

**Jason:** But look where you are now!

[laughter]

**Tony:** Exactly.

**Bobby:** All roads lead here.

**M.Avr:** What made you guys want to pick it back up in 2007?

**Bobby:** Jason kept it alive.

**Jason:** 16 was always like a part of my soul. It was always something special to me. When I wasn't even involved, there was a piece of me that was missing. But I always made merch, like selling T-shirts and stuff. Back in 2005, I created the 16 MySpace page when there wasn't even a band anymore. I just wanted people to know about the band and still let the music live on, even though it was done. I was going to get Billy Anderson (a record producer who has worked with bands such as The Melvins, Eyehategod, Sleep, Jawbreaker, and Neurosis) to remix all the songs from the records I played on. I wanted to release those as some sort of box set. I wasn't going to mess with the stuff I didn't play on because that just wouldn't have been right. Then I ran into Tony one night at a Rwake and Black Cobra show in L.A. at the Relax Bar. We started rapping and I just told him, "Fuck, dude, Billy Anderson just finished remixing the *Drop Out* shit. We should try getting back together again and do some shows."

After that, it just fucking worked! I don't know how it happened. Tony talked to Chris, or Tony talked to Bobby... I hadn't talked to Chris for six years. Then a couple weeks later, we were all on the phone saying, "Fucking a! Let's give it a shot and do some shows." It just magically came back together again. We didn't have anything planned. We were just going to get together and do some shows. Once we got back together in that rehearsal room, the magic was still there! It was fucking fun! I missed these dudes and I missed this fucking band, a lot! I wasn't playing; I just got out of the psych ward. I had been in all kinds of hospitals. I was just about ready to shoot myself because life got so bad. But the band saved my ass, again.

**M.Avr:** How does the 16 of today compare to the 16 of the past?

**Bobby:** I don't know if there is a difference.

**Tony:** We're older now. I think we have a lot more miles on us. We have a healthier perspective on most everything.

**Jason:** We're better at our instruments, too, I think. I think we're a lot better at writing songs. I think, physically and mentally, we're all a lot stronger than we were even back then about being able to play, and we have a distinct idea of what we're trying to accomplish, when we didn't have any fucking clue how to do it before. It's like, finally, we're at the point where we can make what we wanted to make. It's better that way.

**M.Avr:** The newer songs have more low end in the sound. It's a lot heavier. They have more of a punch to them.

**Bobby:** It might be modern recording advances. A lot of it is that we're better at operating our equipment, too.





*"The whole drive up to this rotten fuckin' town, I'm screaming at the cars in the rain, there's too many fuckin' people, I'm agitated as fuck, but as soon as I get behind the drumset I'm going to forget about everything. I'm going to beat the shit out of those fuckers, and I'm going to feel like a million bucks! When I get done, I'm going to be destroyed physically and mentally, but ten minutes after that I'm going to feel like a new man."*

**M.Avrq:** Even when you guys played at the Relax, and you played mostly stuff off the new album, then you played "Tocohara," I could tell a difference.

**Chris:** Oh yeah, I could hear a difference, too, when we played that shit.

**Bobby:** When we go back to our old songs.

**Chris:** I hear the difference you're talking about. It's thinner, huh?

**M.Avrq:** I still like those songs, but it is a little thinner in sound than...

**Chris:** Than what we play now, which is heavier and bigger.

**Tony:** We wrote the new record, unintentionally, like that.

**Chris:** It probably has something to do with recording equipment, too. We were on tape back then, now we're digital.

**Jason:** We were all live. It was live recording.

**Bobby:** The new songs, we tried to write them as dynamically as we could. We all have attention spans of, I don't know, thirty seconds.

**Chris:** We also have to prove something to the people who still like it. We bring the power, just like anybody else who's getting all the good shit right now. We started it, and they copied it, and they got lucky playing it. Now that we just came back, we have to prove that we have the balls to hang with anybody else doing this shit right now.

**M.Avrq:** I remember when *Curves That Kick* came out, and that was pretty good. Then I heard *Drop Out*, and I was totally like, "Fuck, where did this come from!?" It was heavy, and this new one, I think, is even heavier.

**Chris:** We're also just getting a little more bitter. In the early '90s we were in our early twenties, we were having fun. Adulthood

hadn't beaten the shit out of us yet. [laughter] We weren't angry and pissed off... What is it, thirteen, fourteen years later, when we recorded *Drop Out*?

**M.Avrq:** I saw you guys at Gilman in like '93 or '94.

**Jason:** I was playing then, too.

**M.Avrq:** You looked totally different too. You looked like Southern California skater dudes. Then I see you at the Relax Bar, and I was like, "Is this the same band?"

**Chris:** Life has not been good to us at all.

**Jason:** It's funny you mention that show. I remember we wanted to play a bunch of our new shit that night, the stuff for *Drop Out*, it hadn't even come out yet. I remember Pushead (of illustration fame, as well as running Bacteria Sour in the '90s, through which he released a string of 16 singles, EPs, and an album or two) telling us, "No, there's fans here. They're going to want to hear some of your older material." I remember thinking to myself, "My god, why aren't we playing this fucking new shit that would knock these people's dicks into the dirt? We're still going back to play *Curves That Kick* songs, when we could play "Trigger Happy," or "Tocohara." Something that would have crumbled that place.

**M.Avrq:** I remember you guys, but I don't remember anyone else on that bill.

**Chris:** We're the only ones still together! [laughter]

**Bobby:** Jawbreaker was on that bill.

**Chris:** We have a little friendly chemistry together, too. There's something going on with the four of us. We've been doing it for a while, and we're all really good friends.

It's natural to stay together and still play, make something happen. We've been trying to make this shit work for fucking years. So we came back to try again.

**Bobby:** What else are you going to do with your time? There's nothing better. What are you going to do? Play golf? I'd rather die.

**M.Avrq:** What do each of you, personally, get out of playing in this band?

**Bobby:** It's a total oddity in life. I don't even tell anybody I'm in a band who doesn't know. They would think it's something like I go play covers in a casino.

**Chris:** A little bit of therapy. I write lyrics that just bum people out, they bum me out, but they make me happy at the same time. The more depressing shit I write, it makes me feel better about my shitty-ass life. It's what I need. The four years that this was down, I was sober, smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, and I was one of the most pissed-off fucking people anybody had met. Just completely upset. This band comes back, and I'm pretty happy right now. We've got a lot of good things going on. I'm with my friends. We're out moving around and doing things.

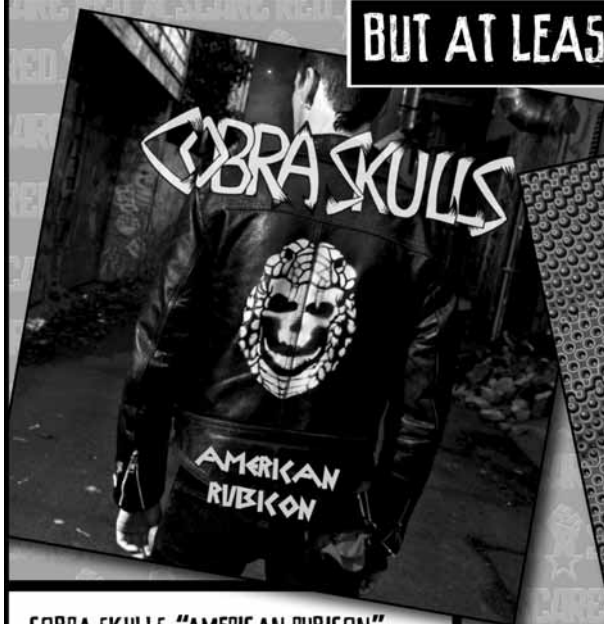
**Jason:** It's an amazing way to be creative. There's nothing like making a fucking beat that just fucking grooves—that I can headbang to—to a goddamn riff that I love. That's the shit; making this music that I want to hear and we have fun playing. The whole drive up to this rotten fuckin' town, I'm screaming at the cars in the rain, there's too many fuckin' people, I'm agitated as fuck, but as soon as I get behind the drumset I'm going to forget about everything. I'm going



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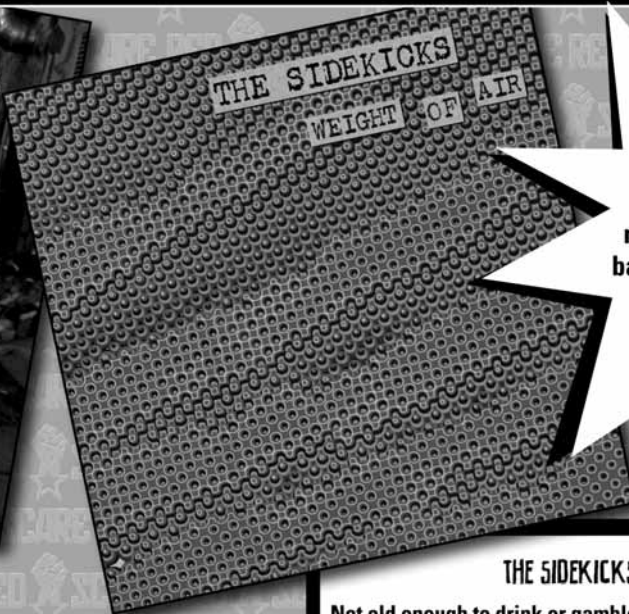
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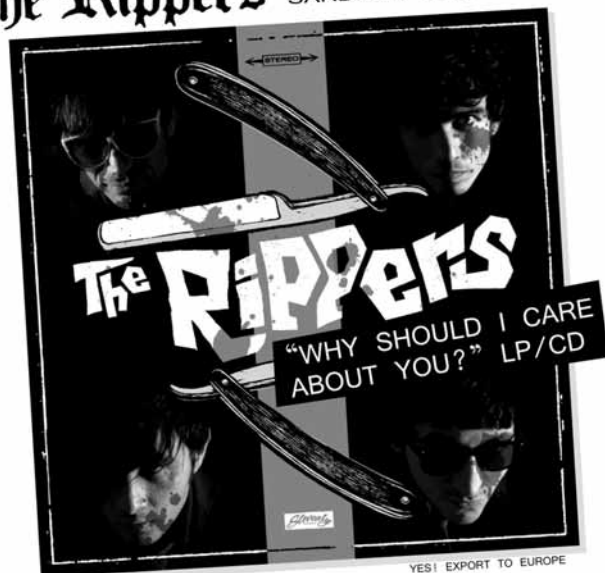
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to beat the shit out of those fuckers, and I'm going to feel like a million bucks! When I get done, I'm going to be destroyed physically and mentally, but ten minutes after that I'm going to feel like a new man. Plus I'm with my friends. I don't hang out with anyone else, just these guys and my girl. That's it. And my cats.

**Tony:** Like Jason said, it's an outlet to be creative and to get out there. Something to do with my time. I don't have a family. All I have is my stupid job. I don't have any hobbies, so this fills a lot of purpose for me.

**M.Avr:** Why so much negativity in the lyrics? [laughter]

**Chris:** A way of cleansing. It's either that or, I don't mean to sound like a tough guy or whatever, I'm going to fuckin' shoot up some fucking place. I just fuckin' hate everything. When I write lyrics about that, "blah blah blah, I hate everything," I keep it separate. In the middle there's chaos, then I separate the two. Keep the pain and shit over there, I go home and hang out with my kids and I'm laughing and smiling, and there is no sadness. I put it over there with that, and that's where I aim it. With the four of us, and the music, when it's all put together people like it.

**Bobby:** I had such optimism when I was twenty-three. [laughter]

**M.Avr:** Then you hit thirty and see everything you believe in is shit.

**Bobby:** It's just all a lie. It's all about a bunch of bullshit.

**M.Avr:** I remember when I hit twenty-five, waking up one morning thinking, "What the fuck am I doing with my life?" Then when I hit thirty, everything I believed in, I was like...

**Bobby:** That was all wrong! [laughter]

**M.Avr:** You keep hoping things will level off. As you get older and older, things that should make sense, don't make sense. You want to mellow out and not be pissed off, negative, and bitter.

**Bobby:** You would think after a certain time you would gain some acceptance of the whole thing, but you're still pissed.

**Chris:** That's just where I find the emotion. It's because of the way I sing it, obviously. If Alanis Morissette was singing the same lyrics I was singing, nobody would be asking her why she's so pissed off. They would be like, "Oh, you've had such a hard life. It's just the way you're telling everybody about it," or whatever. The same with me. My delivery is just a lot different because I came up differently. I came up worshipping Henry Rollins and Al Jourgensen (Ministry), whatever the fuck. So I have to put the negativity in the lyrics.

**Bobby:** Anyway else, I couldn't imagine. If Chris came out and wrote a "Shiny Happy People" song, it would be so funny.

**Chris:** I can be having a bad day or whatever. I can be at Robinson's May, buying a thirty-dollar wife-beater, and I'm stoked. But people look at me like, "What's wrong? What are you so mad about?" I'm like, "Fuck man, I was doing fine



**"What else are you going to do with your time? There's nothing better. What are you going to do? Play golf? I'd rather die."**

until you had to point out how fucking ugly I am." [laughter] I had this aura around me. That's why I hate people, right there.

**M.Avr:** What is "Me and My Shadow" about? I see a couple things happening in the lyrics, but I'm not quite sure.

**Chris:** That's mostly my lyrical fantasy about murdering my ex-girlfriend. "Me and My Shadow": me and my little alternate personality.

**Tony:** I thought it was about a serial killer.

**Chris:** That's me! [laughter] It's better to do this than rush over to her house and set it on fire! I'm going to go home and write a song about it. That's a lot more creative and I don't get into any trouble doing it this way.

**M.Avr:** Is "Skin and Bone" about a relationship gone sour as well?

**Chris:** No. That's more about me losing a bunch of weight because I relapsed on drugs, actually.

**M.Avr:** In "Skin and Bones," the lyrics are in first person, then, at one point, it sounds

like you're addressing someone else.

**Chris:** I just kind of float away sometimes. In the writing process, I'll hum something to whatever part, words will get stuck, and I can't get them out. I'll just lay them down there. Sometimes they don't make sense. Sometimes they do.

**M.Avr:** If you could make a movie, with 16 as the centerpiece, like the Beatles did with *Help!* What sort of movie would it be like?

**Chris:** It would be like *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*, or *River's Edge*.

**Bobby:** All Crispin Glover! [laughter]

**Jason:** *Die Hard*, or *Rambo: First Blood*.

**Chris:** Anything just wrong.

**M.Avr:** Who approached who about being on Relapse?

**Jason:** They approached us. Somebody from Relapse ordered a shirt. I sent the guy the shirt and responded back with, "Hey your shirt will be there in a couple days." I got an email asking, "What's up with that *Drop Out* record that you guys did? Is it still in print?" I said, "No, that shit's been out of print forever." Then he said, "Well, we want to reissue that." I said, "That's fucking great you want to reissue it, but we got some new songs we're working on, and we're going to go record those. Why don't I send them to you and you can check them out?" After we recorded them, two weeks later, I sent them to him. It was that easy. It's kind of bizarre.

I was calling friends like, "Hey I got this contract from Relapse, and I don't know if I need to get a lawyer and check this thing out. What do I do? I don't have money for that." The guy said, "Well, look. Is anybody else coming after you to sign your band?" I was like, "No." Then he said, "Shut the fuck up and sign it already!" It makes sense.

**M.Avr:** Is there a bigger interest in the band as result of all this?

**Jason:** Fuck yeah!

**Bobby:** They've shipped as many as we've ever sold. We never even had an ad in a magazine. Now we have it all the time.

**M.Avr:** What sets 16 apart from everyone else, in your mind?

**Bobby:** I don't know if you can quantify that, and I think that's a good thing. An unspoken vibe us four have playing together, and that's what the vibe is, that's why we keep doing it. A lot of bands ignore chemistry these days. Everybody is a great player. It's like, who cares? We're all great players individually, but how do you play together?

**Jason:** Our personalities, and what happens when the four of us get together in a room. What we're able to make. We make what we want to make, and we're happy playing what we want to play, and we rock the fuck out. I love our fuckin' band! It's my favorite band on the planet. I love doing it. It's my reason for being. 16 is just 16. Listen to our records and you'll get it.

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**Eric: guitar, vocals | Jon: bass, vocals  
Kris: guitar, vocals | Moose: drums**

**Interview by Megan Pants | with help from Ian Floetl  
Photos by Heather Ivanovich and Katie Hovland**

**"IF YOU HAVE THE SENSE OF HUMOR  
OF AN EIGHTH GRADER  
AND ABSOLUTELY HATE  
GOOD MUSIC, THEN...**

**THE BROK**







HEATHER IVANOVICH

# KE-DOWNS

...ARE THE BAND FOR YOU."



# I NEVER SUCCESSFULLY HUFFED GLADE. We just sprayed the Glade right into our mouths. It fucking sucked so bad.

**Megan:** Moose, did your dad give you porn when you were little so that you wouldn't turn out gay?

**Moose:** Yeah. Also, from my tenth birthday on, he would let all of my friends sleep over and he'd buy us vodka and beer and tell us, "Stay in your room. If you need anything, let me know. Don't be loud. And, if you're gonna puke, puke out the window." And every year, 'cause my birthday's in the winter, there'd always be brown puke in the white snow outside my window.

**Kris:** That sounds like it's trying to kick-start some gay behavior. If you're not born gay, giving your ten-year old vodka and locking him in his room with his friends, that is definitely what makes you gay.

**Moose:** I was just talking about this last night. When I was a kid—yeah it was illegal, but it wasn't frowned upon—to give your kid cigarettes.

**Kris:** Dude, it was definitely frowned upon everywhere. What are you talking about?

**Moose:** We're Albanian, alright? It wasn't weird.

**Kris:** Dude, no. It's weird everywhere. In Baghdad, that's weird.

**Megan:** How old were you when he gave you porn?

**Moose:** That was probably right around ten. We'd go to a convenience store. "Can my son go behind the counter and get a naked magazine? You know, I don't want him to be... gay." They never told us no.

**Jon:** Parent's consent.

**Megan:** I guess, technically, he was buying it. Like, with lottery tickets, your kid can pick the numbers, as long as you're the one buying it.

**Moose:** Oh, he didn't make me work until I was eleven. He paid for it until then.

**Megan:** You practice here in Chicago and you play most of your shows in Chicago. What keeps you living in the suburbs?

**Kris:** Grew up there and it's not a terrible place.

**Moose:** Cigarettes were cheaper when we smoked, so I guess now there's nothing holding us back.

**Kris:** I also like to drive twenty-seven miles when I need to go somewhere.

**Jon:** I like to drive everywhere I go.

**Megan:** Who's Sean Spencer (from their song "Who Stabbed Sean Spencer")?

**Kris:** Sean Spencer is the definition of Carpentersville, which is the shittiest city in the fucking country.

**Moose:** I grew up in Carpentersville. My neighbor was a kid named Sean Spencer, about three years older than me. He robbed my house when my family went on vacation, stole my dad's gun, and told a kid at the pool, "Hey, be here tomorrow. I'm gonna shoot you, man." I found all of this out way later. He showed up there and had the gun. He was gonna kill this other kid. They were about fourteen when this happened. He saw cops outside, so he chickened out last minute, but he was gonna kill this kid.

**Kris:** Totally would've been worth it.

**Moose:** And then he ended up being my drug dealer, like my first-ever drug dealer. He used to steal everybody's bikes in town, and then he graduates to stealing CDs, books, stereo equipment, all that stuff.

**Kris:** Sounds like a step down. I think he did it backwards.

**Moose:** He went to a gas station, and the girlfriend of the guy he had beef with was like, "Quit fuckin' with my man!" and stabbed him. He just put his hand over his wound and walked home. That was that.

**Jon:** When I saw him last he was all, "What's up? You guys used my name?"

**Kris:** Doesn't he punch his dogs in the face and shit, too? There are depths to this depravity?

**Jon:** I smoked bongs with him.

**Kris:** He's not just a fun-loving guy who goes to a pool to shoot a dude. He's the dude who punches dogs in the face.

**Moose:** The only phone number I have to reach him is his daughter's cell phone.

**Kris:** And he's like twenty-five, probably.

**Moose:** He's a short, stocky guy and I've seen him make big guys cry 'cause he'd punch himself in the face and be all, "C'mon, motherfucker!" and punch himself in the face. "[crying voice] I don't want to fight!" He's a scary dude, but he's also one of my friends.

**Megan:** Speaking of people you can't really get a hold of, Jon, why don't you use the internet?

**Jon:** Just a partial Luddite.

**Moose:** He's got a Blackberry now, though.

**Kris:** Watching Jon on a computer is the

greatest fucking thing in the world. He sits there, breathing heavily, hunched over it with his index fingers out, going, [makes raspy, deep breaths], drooling. It's fucking awesome.

**Moose:** You know, how could you choose to have all of the photos on your computer as your screen saver? I've seen him sit in front of it for over an hour just looking at the photos and hitting the back button.

**Kris:** We all used to live together and I'd come home all the time; he'd just be hitting "next."

**Jon:** Everyone around me does that shit and it's fucking weird to me. There's people I've had regular relationships with before, and now that's all they do.

**Kris:** Jon's gonna get a MySpace page in a year-and-a-half.

**Jon:** If I do get one, it will be really late.

**Megan:** I think I get it. I, at least once a week, think about deleting the whole thing.

**Jon:** I understand the good parts of it—keeping in touch with people you don't see very often—but isn't it cool when you go someplace and you see someone you haven't seen in a while? That's cool.

**Kris:** It's embarrassing when you're on there sometimes. Two hours into it and you're like, "What the fuck am I doing? I've been on here for *two hours!*"

**Jon:** I understand it's necessity, but I just don't need it.

**Megan:** But you're in school, right?

**Jon:** Yeah.

**Megan:** So how does that work without computers?

**Jon:** I do have an e-mail.

**Kris:** Which no one knows.

**Jon:** The only people I e-mail are my teachers.

**Megan:** That's actually how I ended up getting a Facebook page. I had to for one of my classes. It was a requirement.

**Kris:** He's going to school because he's devoted to starting a new social network website.

**Megan:** What are you going to school for?

**Jon:** I don't really know yet. Maybe science or history, but my job pays for it, which is why I'm going.

**Megan:** What do you do?

**Jon:** I load trucks and build palettes. I just found it in the benefits that they'd totally pay for school.

**Megan:** And, Moose, you just got your GED last year, right?

**Moose:** Yeah.

**Megan:** What made you decide to do that?

**Moose:** I wanted to throw a kick-ass graduation party. Which happened.

**Megan:** When did you leave school?

**Moose:** I dropped out of high school three times at the end of my senior year, literally, like the last week. There was a mistake. My guidance counselor messed up and told me that I could drop a class and I'd still have enough credits to graduate and then, last minute, was all, "Wait a minute... you don't have enough credits." So, I left. Then I went back at the beginning of the year, but I had to work full time and my job wouldn't let





HEATHER IVANOVICH





KATIE HOVLAND



me have part time hours, so I left again. Went back, and then I missed finals to go to a buddy's mom's funeral, and I then I showed up with all of my work, and my principal was yelling at me, so I dropped out again right then. I didn't know that the economy was going to be this shitty, but I thought, just in case, I'd better get my GED.

**Kris:** Now? He's the CEO of AIG. Got that shit right in time! Now he's the press secretary for Obama. Boom!

**Megan:** Who's Kyle Morgan?

**Moose:** Whoah! How do you know about that?

**Megan:** I don't even know. I didn't remember writing it down.

**Moose:** That's that dude I was supposed to play drums for who killed that guy.

**Megan:** Is he a guy you went to high school with?

**Moose:** He played shows at the club. I don't know that dude personally. He doesn't know me personally. The guy was supposed to record with my buddy, Geno. He asked me, since I was laid off, if I wouldn't mind playing drums for a day for \$600 or whatever it was. I said sure. A few days before we were supposed to record, I found out that this guy killed this dude in Woodstock. And then I found out that the guy was *him* and he went on the run. And then, I found I had just hung out with that guy, the guy who he killed. I used to do my laundry at two AM at the twenty-four-hour laundromat. This guy was sleeping when I walked in there and he woke up swingin'. I'm like "Dude, relax." And then he told me right away, "I'm not homeless. I'm waiting for this friend, a doctor, who's going to take me over to his son's house in Woodstock 'cause I got his son off of drugs and he's going to let me stay there for a while." Well, the doctor was the guy's dad, the dude who killed him. It was weird. They said his whole escape strategy was he was going to Memphis. That's where he got busted, and they found out he was going to Brazil. Before the murder happened, my buddy Geno was all, "Recording's on Monday because he's going to Memphis the weekend before to go get a guitar player, and then we're going to record. Then he's going to Brazil." So, I knew about his whole leaving and had nothing to do with the murder.

**Megan:** Didn't you also go to school with someone who murdered people?

**Moose:** I think you're thinking about Johnnie Johnson (changed for reasons you'll read about in a second). He killed a bunch of cats.

**Megan:** What kind of a suburb is this?

**Kris:** The suburbs are the weirdest places in the world.

**Moose:** He broke into his teacher's house and killed her cats. He was trying to graduate to people.

**Kris:** We're going to get sued. You can't just go around saying people did shit like this. Are you sure he did this?

**Moose:** Okay, well his name was Johnnie Johnson then. That dude didn't kill anyone, just a couple of cats. He was on the run. It

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was a whole Summer of Sam thing. He got a taxi cab and had a hatchet. He stuck the hatchet in the lady taxi driver's head, but it just bounced off. Then she grabbed the hatchet and chased him.

**Kris:** That's so awesome!

**Moose:** So, he tried to kill a person and it didn't work.

**Kris:** What a loser.

**Moose:** I think he's out now.

**Megan:** That's a rough start to a career in killing. Kris, what was your first experience with huffing Glade?

**Kris:** I never successfully huffed Glade. I had a buddy and we were trying to get high. He was like, "You can huff Glade." We didn't understand how to huff, even though, at that point, I'd done lots of drugs. But, we just sprayed the Glade right into our mouths. It fucking sucked so bad. My dad told me I had to do that to not be gay, but every time I'd blow a guy, he'd burn the shit out of me.

**Megan:** Why don't you play "Punx Not Dead" when Ian screams for it at shows?

**Moose:** Because Ian screams for it at shows.

**Megan:** Or, is it because you, in fact, think that punk is now dead?

**Kris:** I think Jon wrote that song when he was twelve years old.

**Jon:** Literally twelve.

**Kris:** And Ian won't let it go. You know he got that from Dan Powers.

**Jon:** They must've gotten a tape.

**Kris:** Was it p-u-n-x?

**Jon:** Yep.

**Kris:** It would've sucked if it was k-s.

**Moose:** D-e-d?

**Megan:** What was the first punk album that you ever bought?

**Kris:** I had a cool aunt, so I had all kinds of shit. I had the Cramps when I was seven years old. I had *Bad Music for Bad People* at seven, best looking album cover I've ever had. My dad dug it too.

**Jon:** I think mine was Screeching Weasel *BoogadaBoogadaBoogada*, other than Green Day *Dookie*, or whatever was out at the time.

**Moose:** I was Op Ivy and then Green Day.

**Megan:** I thought one of you was really into Dead Milkmen early on.

**Kris:** Three of my friends in fourth grade were obsessed with them. I still am. That's probably the longest-running band in my life. I've listened to them since I was nine. I love that band.

**Megan:** And I'm going to miss them when they play here.

**Kris:** Me too. It's Jon's wedding.

**Megan:** It's Designated Dale's wedding for me. Fuck you, Dale.

**Kris:** It's gonna suck. Well, it might not suck, but I'd imagine it wouldn't be the greatest.

**Jon:** It's gonna be kick-ass.

**Kris:** Way to make him feel guilty!

**Megan:** Moose, did you have a band called Crystal Shyps?

**Moose:** This dude Tyler made me do it and we never did anything. Don't worry about that question.

**Kris:** We don't want to talk about that. We don't!

**Megan:** I don't know. You seemed pretty serious. You placed an ad looking for members.

**Moose:** It wasn't me. See? That's Tyler. He's nuts.

**Megan:** "Two drummers looking for two bass players and two keyboard players. If you think you have what it takes..."

**Moose:** He also told me that the idea was to have two drummers and we were gonna get two bass players and one of them was going to be a girl and he was going to break the band up once he started having sex with said girl bass player.

**Megan:** And all the try-outs were going to be filmed for "the upcoming documentary on the assembly of Crystal Shyps"?

**Moose:** He tried to get Jim Miller (Cassette Deck) to fund it.

**Kris:** That sounds complicated as shit.

**Megan:** How old were you?

**Kris:** This was like last year!

**Moose:** I strongly think we should avoid that whole thing because I was not happy to be a part of that.

**Kris:** I would like this whole fucking interview to be based upon that.

**Megan:** And you guys are working toward becoming that right now?

**Moose:** These guys are holding me back from Crystal Shyps.

# Kris: HIS PARENTS TRIED TO ASSASSINATE THE ARCH DUKE OF ALBANIA.

## Moose: That's almost not a joke.

**Kris:** Moose could be having sex with his two bandmates right now.

**Megan:** What happened with the band The Brokedown?

**Jon:** The Broken West?

**Kris:** Yeah. They got really mad at us and it sucked because...

**Jon:** They're still mad at us?

**Kris:** Dude, they fucking *hate* us. They were The Brokedowns and then they changed their name to The Brokedown, and we didn't give a fuck. We honestly did not give a shit at all. Our friend, who put out a couple of records for us, he sent Merge Records a cease and desist letter.

**Jon:** We didn't even know about it.

**Kris:** The next thing we know, they're talking about us in interviews. We're like, "We don't give a shit!"

**Jon:** "Keep the name!"

**Kris:** "You can have it!" We would have preferred to change our name. We *should* have changed our name. We're definitely not hanging on to the name.

**Jon:** That guy that sent the cease...

**Kris:** He's a great guy. We're totally tight with him and he's one of the greatest men in the world. I think he thought that was what we really wanted, but we didn't at all. We made the dude from Superchunk—I love Superchunk, man!—we made him pissed off at us. That bums me out so bad. Catfish Haven toured with them and wrote me a letter: "Dude, did you make a band change their name?" No! We didn't do anything.

**Megan:** When I first started seeing you play, I thought you were a three-piece because Eric was never there when I first moved here. How different is it for you when you play as a three-piece from when all four of you play?

**Kris:** He is here, crying. [They brought along a life-sized cardboard cutout bust of Eric to the interview and to put it on stage when he's not there. Wrinkles in it from the glue make him look like he's crying.] He's changing diapers right now, bawling.

**Megan:** He's crying because we're not including him in the interview at all.

**Kris:** It's better, tighter, probably. It's not different at all.

**Jon:** I miss him being there. I love the dude.

**Kris:** We love it when he's there.

**Jon:** I'd rather he be here. It's one of those things where we'd never replace him. "You've got to come to practice or that's it!" He's got his thing to do.

**Kris:** Before he had his kid, he was the main administrative guy. He would book every show. He'd handle our money. But, he can't do it as often now and whatever. We love him, though. He came with us on that last tour that we did for a bit.

**Jon:** He met us for the last few days.

**Kris:** He's our soul mate. The main thing that changes when he's not around is that our sets are like ten minutes shorter because he's usually twenty times drunker than all of us and just rambles. You can't shut him up.

**Jon:** He's always on Ritalin because he's narcoleptic.

**Megan:** They use Ritalin for that?

**Jon:** Yeah. He has to take it four times a day. But then he gets drunk, and it's one of those things where he can't fall asleep.

**Kris:** He becomes the party terrorist.

**Moose:** We'll put him to bed and then he'll come out "OOOOOOOH." His body is awake, but his mind is not.

**Kris:** Anytime he gets away on his own, he's Jim Belushi.

**Moose:** John Belushi.

**Kris:** Did I say Jim? No, I think he is more like Jim Belushi.

**Jon:** You're right. But he raged so hard that even the D4 guys were like, "You've got to do something with him."

**Megan:** How does it feel that Wikipedia deleted your page because you're a "non-notable band"?

**Kris:** Did they really? Because someone said we had a Wikipedia page. I looked at it, and thought it was cool. I'd have to say that Wikipedia was right. They were actually correct in their decision. They run a real tight ship over there. There's probably a Crystal Shyps page.

**Moose:** I wonder what you have to do to become a notable band.

**Kris:** We're involved in a lawsuit with fuckin' Merge Records, alright? We sued the fuck out of them! We'll sue Wikipedia too! Fuckers.

**Megan:** Was playing with Local H your favorite show ever?

**Kris:** God, no.

**Jon:** Especially when we ate their food. Kris got drunk and fucked up their wardrobe.

**Kris:** No I didn't.

**Megan:** They have wardrobe?

**Jon:** You were drunk. You were throwing their clothes down.

**Kris:** I'll tell you what. The lead singer of that band is a really nice guy. The drummer

was the biggest fucking douche I've ever met in my life.

**Moose:** He's also their manager and he was yelling at the owner of the club's mom, who was our boss. Real nice lady.

**Kris:** She's like seventy years old.

**Moose:** Yeah, a seventy-year-old lady's all, "Here's your food." And he's...

**Kris:** "If there isn't a fucking band on stage in ten fucking minutes, we're leaving!"

**Moose:** And then we went on and kept saying how we had to hurry the fuck up because Local H insisted on being on stage at a certain time or they threatened to not play.

**Kris:** The owners of the club told us they needed us to play right then, but not to say anything about it. So, we kept saying stuff. But we blew the minds of about four hundred soccer moms.

**Moose:** We had a party at our house, right down the street, and that dude Scott actually told me to call him so he could come to the party. We all lived together, so I asked, "Do you want him to come?" Everyone said no, so we never called him.

**Megan:** I don't even know who they are. I'd never heard of them.

**Kris:** They had a hit song. They're really popular in Chicago.

**Jon:** Remember we blew our break that night, too? Someone told us they had a guy from a big label there to check us out. "I had somebody lookin' at you, but you all blew it. I tell you that right now. You were very unprofessional."

**Moose:** We blew our deal.

**Megan:** How did Moose join the band, or why did Fleck leave?

**Jon:** Fleck was busy pursuing his crack and military career.

**Kris:** He was pursuing the goals of being a crack dealer. He would bring crack on tour and sell it.

**Jon:** He wouldn't bring drums.

**Kris:** Yeah, no drums, but he'd bring crack. He was just a douche, and we knew Moose.

**Jon:** Moose was always a good dude to hang out with.

**Megan:** How does crack sell in cities where people might not know you?

**Kris:** Honest to god, I never believed the guy. He'd talk all day about the game he had and what a king of the street he was. And then, I'd hear from friends who were hardcore drug addicts who were like, "I actually relapsed because your drummer sold me the shittiest meth I've ever gotten hold of." Just weird shit.

**Jon:** He actually did sell it. He'd sell it to people who he knew that had problems.

**Moose:** The dudes in my old band, I found out that they were doing drugs with Fleck, or buying them off of him. Do you remember when Dan was like, "Fleck kept asking me if I did coke, and I was like, 'Naw man, I don't do that any more.' But that shit was blue! I'd do coke, but I wouldn't do *blue* coke!" Fucking Ajax or something. He used to come and pick me up in a different car. I'd look





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HEATHER IVANOVICH

in the backseat and it'd have a pink fuzzy steering wheel cover and leopard print fuzzy dice because he had to take all the stuff off from whoever he borrowed the car from to make sure everything was copasetic.

**Megan:** Was someone really slipping cyanide into milk cartons (from the song "S.A.R.S. Groove")?

**Kris:** Yeah, in the '80s. That was a legit thing. I remember as a kid, you had to smell your milk. If it smells like almonds, you throw it away. That was a scare.

**Megan:** I looked it up, but couldn't find anything on it.

**Kris:** It was a local thing. It was probably my father. It was a legitimate news story, but my father... I come from a long line of paranoid lunatics. The thing that happens to 0.0001% of the population is going to happen to *you* right now.

**Megan:** Did they ever find out who did it?

**Kris:** No. It was on the East Coast, too, because when I was in Maine... no Connecticut...

**Megan:** Oh, they're so different!

**Kris:** My mom's side of the family moved to Connecticut. There were some in Maine and some in Connecticut.

**Moose:** Kris's dad was a total hippie, but he had guns.

**Kris:** My dad's a gun enthusiast hippie.

**Megan:** You don't find too many of those.

**Kris:** He actually sold a gun to Hunter S. Thompson, but got ripped off. So, when I was a little kid and I was getting into *Where the Buffalo Roam*. He was, "Fuck him! Fucking guy ripped me off!"

**Megan:** Okay, this one might be a bit fruity, but some of your songs are silly, and not all that serious, but then others definitely have

some serious themes in them. Do you feel that there is an obligation to have a message to music, or does it just come out because it's something that you think about, or something completely different?

**Kris:** I don't think that there's an obligation at all. Me and Jon write all the lyrics.

**Jon:** We just write about what we think about.

**Kris:** And anything that I write about that's serious is usually kind of funny also. I'm trying to be silly about it in a way. That "S.A.R.S. Groove" song is the silliest fuckin' song.

**Jon:** But there's true shit in it.

**Kris:** I'm from a very paranoid family and it bums me out.

**Megan:** I'm sorry.

**Kris:** I'm over it! 'Cause I don't give a fuck! I don't give a shit!

**Megan:** Kris, what are your thoughts on Octomom?

**Kris:** I fuckin' love Octomom. Huge fan.

**Megan:** Why?

**Kris:** Because she's such a fucking perfect metaphor for our country. She's such a dipshit. She got all weird and Right to Life about it. No one talked about that. She got fucking injected with like eight things and then she was like, "Well, if I got rid of them..." Arrgh! It's maddening! It's too much. I can't even think about it. And, it's a perfect example of having too much faith in faith. She has too much faith in faith. "Oh, everything will work out."

**Q:** Moose, you just got your GED last year, right? What made you decide to do that?

**A:** I WANTED TO THROW A KICK-ASS GRADUATION PARTY. WHICH HAPPENED.



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# THE BROKE DOWNS



Argh! And, it's so not gonna work out. Those kids, man, they're so fucked. They're so deeply fucked. I love her, though. I love her.

**Moose:** I heard that she was Albanian. Did you hear that?

**Kris:** She probably is. This whole thing probably came about because her dad made her watch porn so she wouldn't be gay and she became ultra-retard-hetero. That is what happened! You either become Moose, which is rad, or her.

**Megan:** Were you born here?

**Moose:** Yeah.

**Megan:** But you speak Albanian fluently?

**Moose:** Yup.

**Kris:** Fuck yeah, he does. With the quickness.

**Megan:** Did your parents come over?

**Kris:** His parents tried to assassinate the Arch Duke of Albania.

**Moose:** That's almost not a joke.

**Kris:** His uncle tried to kill a guy in Albania, so they had to leave.

**Moose:** No. Okay, my dad named me after my grandfather who, when he was eleven years old, went to assist his uncle on an assassination mission. So, his uncle gave my grandfather a rifle and said, "I'm gonna shoot this guy three times. If I miss him by the third shot, I want you to start shooting, too." I guess he shot once and my eleven-year-old grandfather shot him and killed him and was part of the military since he was eleven.

**Jon:** We've been talking about guns a lot.

**Megan:** I know.

**Jon:** My dad used to have me shoot guns at a young age. My dad loves guns.

**Moose:** I've never shot a gun.

**Megan:** I've only shot BB guns, and my mom took it away after my dad shot the tail off of a squirrel.

**Jon:** I never killed stuff.

**Megan:** You have to get a permit in Illinois just to go to a range and rent guns.

**Jon:** We'd go to fields.

**Kris:** When I grew up on the river, we'd sit and shoot machine guns into the water. My dad had this way of turning rifles into fully automatic weapons. He could turn a .22 rifle you get from Kmart into a "badadadaadada." My friend Justin, me and him on New Year's Eve when we were fourteen, were like "Let's go shoot some shit! Everyone's shooting off fireworks." We go out on my porch. We just start "badadadadadada." We start shooting into the river and I hear "ping!" Clearly bullets hitting metal. "Ping! ping!" So, we went inside. The next day my neighbors, the people across the river are getting a winch and pulling a boat out. It was a shitty fucking pontoon boat. We must have just popped the pontoon like three times and sunk the side of it. It was fucking awesome. Fuck them!

**Jon:** And their fucking pontoon.

**Megan:** How true do you think this statement is: "If you have the sense of humor of an eighth grader and absolutely hate good music, then the Brokedowns are the band for you."?

**Jon:** Can't argue with that.

**Kris:** That's a review from, I think, the (Chicago) Sun Times. From when we played the Methadones record release show. Ehh... it's totally fuckin' true. It's because, at that show, we were drunk and we were doing the Juggalo...

**Moose:** "Suck a Dick, Mom. I'm Not Going to School"

**Kris:** We live in a hotbed of Juggalo activity—fans of Insane Clown Posse—and I wanted to write a song to appeal to them to make some money, and the song was "Suck a Dick, Mom. I Don't Want to Go to School." We just sang "Suck a dick, Mom. I don't want to go to school" over and over again.

**Moose:** We all thought it was hilarious. No one else did.

**Megan:** Maybe you should bring it back out tonight.

**Moose:** Actually, we brought some of the Juggalos. They rode with us.

**Kris:** Moose hangs with the Juggalos.

**Jon:** We're not kidding, either.

**Moose:** I am not a Juggalo, by any means.

**Jon:** But we roll with a guy who has like seven Juggalo tattoos.

**Kris:** And wears an outfit made out of raspberry blunt wraps and bleeds fuckin' blueberry Faygo.



# THE COATHANGERS

Interview and Photos by Chris Peigler

Layout by Lauren Measure

I'm pretty sure I first heard The Coathangers—from Atlanta—on the computer instead of live or on record, and my initial response was along the lines of "They're okay." Later on I found a used copy of their self-titled first album, *The Coathangers*, and I decided to pick it up. This time my reaction was radically different. It was obvious they hadn't been playing their instruments for years, but they turned that into a strength instead of a weakness. There was this undeniable spark of "I just figured out how to do this" creativity and enthusiasm carrying the whole album, whether they were making fun of spoiled Atlanta suburbanites ("Buckhead Betty"), making fun of the daughters of spoiled Atlanta suburbanites ("Don't Touch My Shit") or dishing on wishy-washy boys ("Parcheezi"). I also loved how Candice's keyboard gave their scrappy garage rock a melodic lift that helped make their songs all the more memorable. I was now solidly in their camp, but I also feared their sense of fun might diminish on future recordings. After all, it's hard to maintain that initial spark of creativity when the band you started for fun becomes a regular touring unit.

So, this past April when I put the needle down for the first time on their second album, *Scramble*, I did

so with a little hesitation. I ended up being surprised and rewarded rather than let down. They made no attempt to try and duplicate their first album. Instead, they made what I view as an art record. With most art records, you end up admiring them more than you end up playing them. The Coathangers bypassed this trap because their sense of fun is still intact along with their melodic talent. This album makes me think of British bands from the late '70s and early '80s like Delta 5 or Liliput, whereas their first album would never have reminded me of those bands. The Coathangers have avoided the dreaded second album misstep and have grown as a band in the process: a neat trick and a rare one at that. On March 13, before they played The Milestone in Charlotte, NC, the band invited me into their van where they discussed not being political, stealing a drum set, and being female musicians.

Stephanie "Rusty"—drums  
Julia "Crook Kid"—guitar  
Meredith "Minnie"—bass  
Candice "B.B."—keyboard

**Chris:** Please tell me the story about the ride to anti-Bush protest in the van.

**Julia:** Actually, it was a Volkswagen...

**Stephanie:** It was a Volkswagen Golf to be specific. We all just jumped in the car. It was really last minute, and then we went and got all inspired by all the...

**Julia:** Protesting.

**Stephanie:** Protesting and the people...

**Julia:** [mockingly] The electricity in the air!

**Stephanie:** We were on our drive back, which was a ten-hour drive. We rode ten hours there and went pretty much straight to the protest, right?

**Candice:** We took a thirty-minute nap.

**Stephanie:** Then went straight to the protest.

**Julia:** Finished the protest; went to sleep.

**Stephanie:** And had to wake up butt-ass early the next day, so we were a little bit beyond the edge of reason by this point when we went back in the car for ten hours, because we were only there for a day. We had to get back to work on Monday, so that is why we were only gone two days. And so when we were coming back we were just like, "If we started a band, what would we name it?" So, we came up with Coathanger Abortion.

**Julia:** Abortion rules.

**Stephanie:** "Coathangers!" And we were all like, "That would be an awesome name!" When we got back home we actually started practicing at Candice's and Julia's apartment.

**Julia:** And realized that Coathangers had not been taken.

**Stephanie:** We just started the band to just fuck around because everybody else is doing it. Why not?

**Candice:** To play music we wanted to hear and to have a good time.

**Stephanie:** Yeah, just to have a good time, and that's what we're still doing to this day.

**Chris:** The other thing I thought was interesting is that you decided to be a band on the way back from a protest, but your band is not overtly political.

**Stephanie:** No!

**Julia:** We all have political interests, but we don't feel that the band is something we want to use for that purpose.

**Stephanie:** Because who am I to say, "This is what you should believe." Who are any





Who doesn't have a  
political view?

But just because you're  
in a band, it doesn't give you  
the right to try to brainwash  
other people.

of us? That's why our MySpace URL is "fuck the Coathangers" because who the fuck are we? Not literally "fuck us."

**Candice:** It's sort of like, "Say what you wanna say. Be who you wanna be." We were sick of seeing people go to shows and just...

**Stephanie:** Stand there.

**Candice:** And not feel like they were a part of it.

**Stephanie:** No matter what you look like, no matter how old you are. It doesn't fucking matter.

**Candice:** You can forget about worrying about what somebody thinks about you and just have a good time. And if you have political beliefs...

**Stephanie:** Awesome! Let's talk about them after the show. We've all been to shows where it's super political punk rock and they just preach for half an hour. Who doesn't have a political view? Everyone does but just because you're in a band, it doesn't give you the right to try to brainwash other people. It's kind of conceited, and we try to stay away from that whole image-based band mentality.

**Meredith:** We just do what we want to do.

**Stephanie:** And we live on the edge.

**Chris:** Is it true that you guys rehearsed for six months before you played a show and were all terrified of playing a show?

**Meredith:** We didn't know what the fuck we were doing. We were just making up little songs.

**Meredith:** We liked listening to the songs. We recorded them in their (Julia and Candice's) apartment.

**Julia:** And told all of our friends, "Hey, you wanna hear these songs we recorded?" So,

they would come and sit in one of our cars or we'd play it for them on a CD.

**Candice:** There are videos of us even—like the first house party we played where we're all standing there...

**Stephanie:** Frozen with terror. Everybody's just standing there looking down. When was it when we realized we have to move? We were so nervous because there's no all-girl band in Atlanta, is there?

**Julia:** There are a couple of bands that are coming up that are all-girl.

**Stephanie:** But when we started, we were the only girl band and we didn't know how to play our instruments. We didn't want to be judged and we didn't want people to think we were taking ourselves seriously. It was a struggle. We were very sensitive.

**Julia:** [jokingly] We're sensitive and we'll kick your ass!

**Chris:** Stephanie, you stole a drum set?

**Stephanie:** Okay, so this was an ex-boyfriend's friend of mine who I got in a fight with pretty recently. His friend had stolen my BMX bike, which sounds really lame because I had a BMX bike for a month and almost broke my chin and I was like, "Fuck this." But it was still a four-hundred dollar fucking bike, you know? I asked him one time, "Have you seen my bike?" and everyone lied to my face saying, "No, we haven't." I go over to one of their parties, and I see my bike covered with a sheet. I was like, "Holy son of a bitch!" I told my friend Liz, "I'm taking his drum set 'cause he owes me." Liz said, "He has an extra drum set that he never uses." So, she helped me swindle the drum set, but I don't play with that one anymore. But I never gave it back! So, I don't know where it is.

**Candice:** Pieces of it went different places.

**Stephanie:** Then I finally manned up and bought a four-hundred dollar drum set, which I play to this day. My sister bought me a five-hundred dollar Gretsch rip-off from China, but it's still beautiful and that's what I practice with. I only bring my shitty drum set on tour so I can spit on it.

**Chris:** You've commented, as a band, about how you didn't really know what you were doing, but then somebody who knew more about music theory would hear a song of yours and say, "Oh, but that's such and such."

**Julia:** We were discovering music theory without ever actually learning it. So, we just played what sounded good to our ears and people would say, "Oh, that's so and so progression." Not that they had to teach us, but...

**Stephanie:** "Here's an easier way to do it."

**Julia:** Her boyfriend taught me power

chords—because I play classical guitar—so I just played whatever because I had no idea.

**Stephanie:** Every time we're at a show, we watch the whole band, but I'll find myself looking at the drummer just to get different ideas and inspiration from other people. So, we're constantly learning, and I think that's good because you can never know everything.

**Julia:** Maybe people who have heard us since we couldn't play feel like we're their little sisters who finally got it, you know? We're proud of ourselves for having gotten to a second record.

**Meredith:** Because we never thought we were even going to play a show.

**Stephanie:** This new album is our baby. On this one we could concentrate more on the artistic part, and we didn't have to worry about things such as me wondering, "Is my timing going to be off?" We got to do what we really wanted to do on this album because we actually knew how to do it.

**Julia:** The best part is that every record and 7" has always been a snapshot of where we are. You can definitely see the progression and if you can't see the progression...then that's fine too.

**Chris:** Is everybody originally from the Atlanta area?

**Stephanie:** I'm from Greenville, South Carolina and then I grew up in the suburbs of Atlanta, unfortunately. Then I moved to Atlanta when I was in college. I moved to L.A. for a couple of years and that was terrifying.

**Julia:** I'm from Russia and I came over here in 1990. I was a refugee.

**Chris:** You were a refugee?

**Julia:** Yeah, they didn't like Jews there. They said, "Get the fuck out." So, we said, "Let's go to the land of opportunity." But, I lived in Atlanta the rest of the time.

**Candice:** [Spoken slowly with exaggerated Southern accent] I'm from Rome, Georgia and then I moved to Atlanta when I was twenty, and I've been there ever since. Almost ten years. Praise Jesus.

**Meredith:** I'm from Massachusetts, and then I moved to Atlanta when I was eighteen, the day after I graduated. And then I met Julia and Candice at work.

**Stephanie:** And we've all been friends for a long time, and that's what helps with being a band. I think that's why a lot of bands don't stay together. They don't really know each other. Instead of working through shit like arguments, they just say, "Fuck it. I don't want to do it." But we've been with each other so long it's, like, "I might not like you today, but I'm going to love you always." We never have to worry about that.



## Please stop pigeon-holing.

Girls in rock'n'roll have been  
labeled as the groupie,  
the whore. You're there to help guys...



**Chris:** I read in one of your interviews where one of you said something about, "We want to encourage other young women; we don't want to be catty."

**Stephanie:** Totally.

**Julia:** Why would we?

**Stephanie:** I think society breeds women to be catty towards each other. It's all based on looks, on guys.

**Julia:** Pits us against each other from the day we're born.

**Stephanie:** This club (The Milestone) is awesome, but the first thing that happened when we walked in—and we hadn't even loaded in yet—I was the first to walk in, and the guy said, "Are you just hanging out here? You can't be back here unless you're in a band." I said, "I am in a band." And he said, "What band?" And I said, "The Coathangers." I said "I know I'm a woman but..."

**Julia:** "I'm going to hurt you."

**Stephanie:** And then another guy came up to me. I guess they hadn't corresponded with each other and said, "You can't be back here." And I said, "I'm in a band! Fuck you!" Please stop pigeon-holing. Girls in rock'n'roll have been labeled as the groupie, the whore. You're there to help guys...

**Candice:** [In exaggerated Southern accent mode again] "We're here to fuck every guy in these bands!"

**Stephanie:** We know plenty of guys in bands, we've been backstage, we've had the passes and everything, and we always get stopped. "Whoa, you girls can't come back here." "I've known that guy for five years. I'm not sucking his dick!" You know, there are already so many things against women in music. Why are we going to try to be catty to other women either in music or out of music? When I see other girls watching our shows, it really makes me happy. I don't know what they think of us, but whenever a girl comments, "Great show tonight," that means way more to me than a guy coming up and saying it. Not that it's invalid coming from a guy, but it means more to me that a woman can come up to us and not talk shit like, "Oh my god, did you see what she's wearing," or "She looks so gross."

**Julia:** Hopefully, we make fun of ourselves enough that people realize we're not that serious.

**Meredith:** 'Cause we don't think we're cool.

**Candice:** There's this client at the salon where I work and he was talking about how his daughter plays guitar and how she went to Camp Jam, which is this camp for musicians, and she was discriminated against because she was the only female guitarist out of all of them. So, she hardly ever got to play or got any attention from anybody because people don't...

**Stephanie:** People don't take women in rock seriously. And that's okay because I'm not asking to be taken seriously. I'm just asking for a little bit of human respect. You would never hear that about a woman who was working a club. If a guy came in, she would probably say, "What band are you with?" She wouldn't be saying, "You can't be back here!" It's just stupid and I just can't believe that this still happens to this day. I can't even



**I only bring my shitty drum set on tour so I can spit on it.**

imagine what it was like for Bikini Kill or The Go-Go's or The Runaways because they were back in the day when they were really discriminated against.

**Candice:** No wonder they rioted.

**Stephanie:** And then people ask, "Why are you so mad?" Why shouldn't I be?

**Julia:** Because you're an asshole!

**Stephanie:** What am I not mad about right now? I'm not a sexist and I am a feminist, but I think people get feminists confused with sexists or lesbians! It's like, "How dare you be a heterosexual feminist."

**Julia:** Next question!

**Chris:** What do you guys do outside of The Coathangers?

**Candice:** I work at a salon.

**Julia:** I work at a prom shop.

**Stephanie:** I work at a bar.

**Meredith:** I'm looking for a job.

**Stephanie:** I just found a job. It took me eight months.

**Candice:** Who wants to hire Meredith?

**Stephanie:** Meredith is an excellent worker.

**Chris:** Are there any interesting stories behind any of your songs that you want to talk about?

**Stephanie:** "Pussy Willow" is funny.

**Julia:** We were watching *Jeopardy* in Norman, Oklahoma with one of our friends, and there was this guy, John, who was with

us. One of the answers on *Jeopardy* was "pussy willow." So, he whispers...

**Meredith:** 'Cause there were five girls there.

**Julia:** 'Cause we were all there, he whispers "What is pussy willow?"

**Candice:** Because he didn't want to offend us.

**Stephanie:** Which is adorable.

**Meredith:** He's a gentleman.

**Julia:** So, we said "Did you just whisper pussy willow?"

**Meredith:** But, that was the right answer.

**Stephanie:** We were just bawling and laughing. So, we decided to name the song "Pussy Willow."

**Meredith:** That night we had to sleep in this one room with bunk beds. Two were on each bunk bed and Stephanie's on the floor. And every time it was quiet, someone would whisper "pussy willow," and we would all start giggling. It was his kid's room and it was the size of this van.

**Julia:** We should have slept in the van.

**Stephanie:** Julia was saying, "I'm breathing in all of your breath." It was hot as hell up there.

**Julia:** We were on the top bunk and they were on the bottom bunk. The little boy had peed on the top bunk.

**Stephanie:** So, it smelled like piss. And it was so nice of him to let us stay there, of course, but we were just delirious by that time.





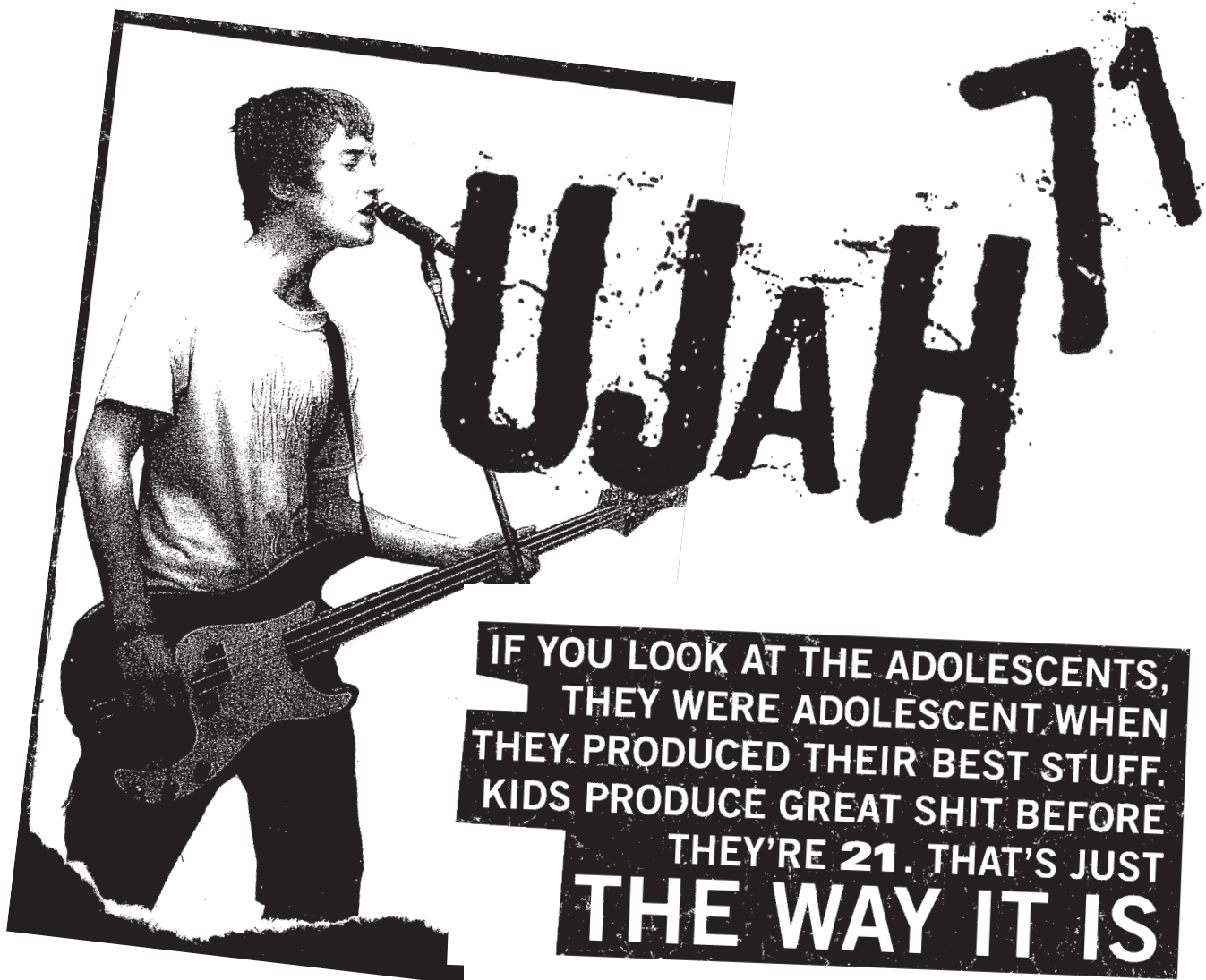
When my sound-engineer friend told me he was recording a punk-rock band made up of high school kids who were born long after punk had supposedly died its third death, I thought, "How cute," in the way puppies are cute when they learn to walk. What I found when I checked out Fallujah 71 was a fully formed sound, tighter than the grip of a pit bull's jaws. It's straightforward old school with an infusion of adolescent piss and vinegar. I would call it street punk if so much music associated with that genre didn't suck. It's the pure sound without the posturing. It's the kind of music that makes an oldster like me want to stop pulling out my gray hairs and start kicking stuff, brittle bones be damned.

The band takes its name from the seventy-one Marines who were the first casualties of Operation Iraqi Freedom. There is an advantage to being in a punk band in the third millennium: A real war to sing about as opposed to a past one, or a war in the abstract.

I met up with the band at their practice space in L.A.'s San Fernando Valley. It's the closest part of civilization to their home in Topanga Canyon, a woodsy enclave above Malibu that claimed its place in history as the home of the Manson Family.

interview and photos by Lisa Weiss  
art junk by Brendan W. Cosgrove





**Anthony "Tony Paradox" Augello:**

Guitar and vocals

**Andrew "Drew" Dennett:** Bass and vocals

**Dante "Tex" Augello:** Drums

**Anthony and Dante's dad, Mike,** was also at practice. He books the band and gives them sound parental advice like, "Play that one faster."

**Lisa:** What's it like being from Topanga Canyon? What's it like living there?

**Drew:** Boring, but you know what? I gotta say we do complain about it a lot, but you never see guns going off by our house and shit. It is better than the city in some ways, but in other ways it's bad because our neighbors will get pissy if we practice at twelve in the afternoon.

**Anthony:** It's a great place if you love hiking and you love smoking a lot of pot, 'cause there is nothing but hippies for miles. And you get plenty of that. And it's really good for tweakers, too. They can hide out, go under the bridge and spray paint, and do their meth.

**Lisa:** Where do you stand on drugs and drinking and stuff like that?

**Dante:** Nothing before you practice and nothing before you play a show. The Johnny Ramone ethic. That's our rule.

**Anthony:** If you can't do something and not do it all the time, don't do it at all. If you are an addictive personality, you shouldn't be touching drugs at all.

**Drew:** What's the word....

**Anthony:** Use your fucking head.

**Drew:** ...to limit something, but not do it too much?

**Anthony:** Moderation. Know your limits, too.

**Lisa:** Among other bands you've played with, do you encounter a lot of straight edge people or folks who are preachy?

**Drew:** If you want to be straight edge, be straight edge. If you want to be a drug addict, be a drug addict but I don't like the preachy thing. Don't tell me what to do.

**Dante:** Let us be who we are.

**Lisa:** How did you guys discover punk rock? How did you first start listening to it?

**Dante:** Daddy showed us.

**Anthony:** We kinda grew up on it, but I rediscovered it in fourth grade when I made a friend who was obsessed with the Ramones. Then I started relearning all the names of

everything. I remember my four favorite bands when I was five were The Clash, Hüsker Dü, the Ramones, and Crystal Method.

**Lisa:** When you were five?

**Anthony:** Yeah. Then I forgot about it for a while. I rediscovered everything. I got really into the Ramones, Black Flag, The Clash—all the old school punk bands that you start out with. The deeper and deeper you dig, the more and more you find.

**Drew:** We used to have a ramp in the backyard and skated and listened to punk, and we'd run around the field and play James Bond and spy on the neighbors when we were eight. Play spy games and military stuff.

**Anthony:** Piss off the old yuppies who walled themselves in their little gates. You don't need it. It's not like there's going to be any shooters up where we live, but they still need to create their little fortresses. Makes them feel good about themselves or something.

**Lisa:** What do you say to people when they say that punk is dead—that there's not the energy there was in 1977, stuff like that?

**Drew:** We don't say anything. I usually tell them it's not worse. It's just different. It's changed. We just play and show them that

they're wrong. And, honestly, a lot of people who say that are just ignorant. I don't think they're even trying to discover anything new. They are kind of thriving on the old.

**Anthony:** There are so many other good new bands out there like Slow Children, Billy Bones, Bad Reaction, Battleflask, Tatort Toilet—all these bands—they're new, they've only formed in the past five years. They're relatively unknown, but there are all these really good bands out there that no one looks at because, for some reason, there's all this pay-to-play stuff. And when you're young, you can't afford to pay \$1,000 to get a shit slot where there's no one to see you.

**Drew:** In the '70s, if you had a band that could play, you were pretty much on the bill. There was no pay-to-play this or crap like that. To summarize it all, I'd say to them ignorance is bliss.

**Anthony:** You think we don't care about this, we don't care about that. You know what? Nobody cares. They said the same thing in the '70s. Nobody cared. You watch some of these interviews on the *Tomorrow* show or something, or you read some of these things that say, "Kids in America, punk is not going to come here because we've got life so good right now. It's so nice. It's so beautiful. It's a great time. It's the '70s. We're having so much fun." Look what happened in '77 to '84. Just when the establishment thinks that everything's going perfect is when people lose it.

**Lisa:** What makes you angry? You're obviously pissed off at something and you can articulate it in three minutes or so, but can you say more specifically what pisses you off and what makes you play punk rock music rather than indie rock or something a little more pleasant?

**Drew:** The Bush administration.

**Dante:** Well, they're gone. We don't have to write about it anymore. What pisses you off, Tony?

**Anthony:** Work. Hippies. I hate hippies.

**Lisa:** Why do you hate hippies?

**Anthony:** 'Cause, look at them. They're just like us except they don't do anything. They just kind of say, "Man, the world sucks. Let's sit here and do nothing about it."

**Drew:** Let's have a jam band session and smoke pot. That's it. That's their answer to fixing problems. Use cheap drugs.

**Anthony:** Stupid people. I really hate stupid people with a burning passion.

**Drew:** Hippies.

**Anthony:** There are stupid people who are hippies but there are also some cool hippies.

**Anthony:** There are stupid people there, but there's also stupid people in your backyard. It doesn't matter. Stupidity in general. Like stupid kids my age, the shit that they say. You can just tell that they are completely full of shit.

**Drew:** People in Nashville. Cops.

**Lisa:** Have you been to different places?

**Drew:** We haven't had a chance to go outside California. Riverside and Palmdale. The desert tour! With the Adicts.

**Anthony:** We played with another new good band in Palmdale. The Gutter Poets were really good. They're unknown. They're not really hardcore-hardcore. Kinda like early Social Distortion, early Bad Religion. They're really good, like the best years of both of those bands.

**Lisa:** Personally, what is your ultimate goal as a band?

**Tony:** To have it pay some bills. No, really, we have been listening to punk rock from in the womb and playing punk rock from the day we could play an instrument, which is about eight years old.

**Dante:** It's in our *blood*, man!

**Tony:** Punk is like the new blues. You either got it or you don't. And if you got it, you got it for life.

**Drew:** It would be nice to be like a Bad Religion or something like that. They make money at it, but are not pseudo-poser punk like Good Charlotte.

**Tony:** We could be like The Gears or The Billy Bones or Smogtown or Dillinger Four. They all have day jobs, but put out the greatest fuckin' music every time they play.

**Drew:** Everybody wants to be successful as a band and we are no different.

**Tony:** But if success means pissing on punk rock or our fans, fuck that.

**Dante:** We have fans?

**Drew:** Fuck you!

**Lisa:** Do you ever have problems getting gigs because you're so young? Obviously, you can't play bars, but what about other places?

**Drew:** Some people think that we have a mostly young

following. We tell them most of the people who actually like us are older. We tried to get on this one show and the guy was giving us a crappy slot and we're telling him, "No, if you let us go on later, we'll get just as many people." And he said, "Well, oh since you guys are young, you obviously have a young following." That's a stupid thing to say.

**Anthony:** They just stereotype just 'cause we're all in high school and stuff that we only know kids, but we've got a sound that everybody ends up liking. My girlfriend likes us. Her little brother, who's twelve, likes us, and her dad likes us. He's, like, fifty-something.

**Lisa:** Was someone very interested in booking you, until they found out what your age was?

**Tony:** The show that comes to mind is the Vinyl Solution/Black Label twenty-year anniversary show at Alex's Bar in Long Beach. Johnny Witmer from the Stitches/Crazy Squeeze was setting it up along with Drax. They both wanted us to play and, at one point, the word was "You guys are on." Then it was, "You're on, but you have to wait outside before and after you play." Then, finally, it was, "Sorry guys. Alex's just does not think they can do it." This was spread out over about two weeks' time.

**Drew:** We had to be twenty-one.

**Dante:** It sucked.

**Drew:** It sucked fuckin' sweaty donkey balls.

**Lisa:** Tell me about the best show you played.

**Anthony:** We played with Agent Orange, and we didn't screw up. That was May 9, 2008 at the Malibu Inn, which doesn't exist any more.

**Drew:** We were really good, but we just weren't as developed. I'd say The Adicts shows.

**Anthony:** The Riverside show was our other best show. We had so many people there. A lot of them were kids and they were, like, "Oh, my fucking god!"

**Lisa:** Do you find that playing places like Riverside or Palmdale, you get more energy in the crowd where it's not so often that you get shows?

**Drew:** They seem more deprived of the music they want to listen to up there. Where we live, there are so many clubs around here where people can go and bands can play. Out there in Riverside, we played in an American Legion hall. In Palmdale, we played in a warehouse.

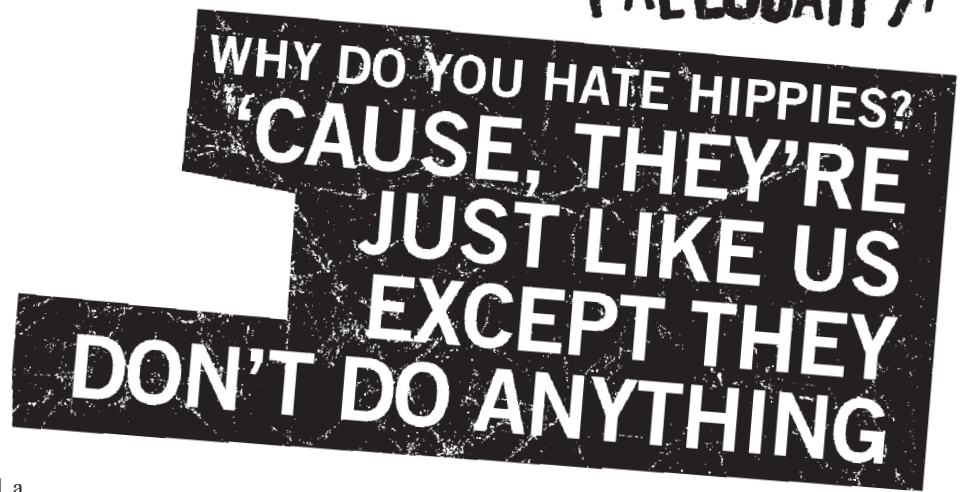
**Anthony:** There are also a lot of those underground shows that we've been trying to get on with bands like The Runts. They are a really good new band, kind of like a street punk sort of band, but they are really

good. They play in all these little places, like people's backyards

and warehouses in East L.A. and I guess they play some really crazy shows there. We still have to get on some of those shows.







**Mike:** They're all nontraditional shows. They're off the radar, spread by word of mouth. If it's in the *L.A. Weekly*, it's not a cool show, essentially.

**Drew:** You can say that in Los Angeles—and this includes us—that we are kind of spoiled. Friday night, sometimes it's like, "You wanna go to this one or this one?" And then we're like, "Eh, we could go to either one, but let's go to this one instead." If we were living somewhere else, we'd be, like, "Oh, a band's playing? Let's go!"

**Lisa:** Tell me about the worst show you've ever played.

**Anthony:** Halloween Carnival. It was Halloween of 2007 at our old elementary school just before Drew joined, with our old bassist, and we had a rhythm guitarist. We get there and I'm told I'm not supposed to use my amp. What? We just disregard that and bring it up. I was really pissed. We hadn't practiced in weeks. Or, if we had, it was like twice in two weeks.

**Dante:** I had a bad fever, like 103, and it was just coming down.

**Anthony:** We get up there. It's outside. The sound is always shit outside in the first place. There is nothing behind us and they have this crappy little P.A. We're just on top of this thing and we can barely hear anything. We play all the songs that we had and we couldn't hear ourselves at all, so we were really off time. We were out of practice. At one point, Dante's crash cymbal fell over and I had to pick it up in the middle of the song. It was a favor to our neighbor. I didn't want to do it. The other kids wanted to do it 'cause all their friends were going to be there.

**Lisa:** What's school like for you?

**Anthony:** A lot of kids, you just listen to them speak and they really think they are so original and they are the only ones who feel like this, but they are so full of shit. You hear that coming out of everybody's mouth every day.

**Dante:** Kids these days.

**Anthony:** Shut up. Don't say that phrase to me ever again.

**Drew:** Especially Anthony, how he looks. People think he's stupid or something but he's actually really smart. I think that's kind of a pain-in-the-ass stereotype: "Oh, 'cause he looks like that, he must be really dumb in school."

**Anthony:** In middle school everyone thought I was a drug addict dumbass, but most of the people who were making that assumption, I got better grades than they did.

**Lisa:** Is your involvement in the punk scene accepted by your classmates, or is it something you use to intentionally distance yourselves from people your own age?

**Drew:** Most people do not even know I'm in a punk band.

**Dante:** Everybody knows I'm in a band, but they don't know that much about it.

**Tony:** Everybody knows I am in a band or suspects I am in a band, especially since I have been selling the CD all over school. Nobody gives me any shit, though. It's not like it was in the '70s and '80s where you would get beat up for being punk in public.

**Dante:** No one can beat me up.

**Drew:** That's right, beefcake.

**Tony:** At school, nobody gives me shit, but out in the street, you do get the occasional moron trying to harass you.

**Drew:** Or throw shit at you from a passing car.

**Lisa:** I hate to ask you this with your dad in the room, but most kids don't get along with their parents this well. Do you guys ever fight about anything?

**Anthony:** Definitely. There's always something.

**Mike:** How can you not? You're stuck in the same room together so many days of the week. You're going to fight about something.

**Dante:** At least it's not like, "Hey, that music you're listening to is shit. Why don't you turn it down?" It's like, "Anthony, go pick up the dog shit." "Can I do it later, please?" That kind of stuff.

**Anthony:** It's, "Do this now." And I don't want to do it now. It's pretty trivial. Typical teenage bullshit that you are gonna fight about anyway.

**Dante:** He supports our music. He's the one who brought us into it. It's nice to have people who don't pull the breaker on you while you are practicing.

**Lisa:** Wasn't there a show where four people showed up, but they all formed bands?

**Anthony:** We had a show at the Cobalt Cafe (in the San Fernando Valley) on December 19, 2008. There were, like, twenty-five people there, mostly the bands and their girlfriends. The four people who were there, who were not in bands, saw us and they came up to us afterward and they said, "Wow! You guys are really old school and really cool. We love you." I saw the same kids a few months

later at one of the last Adolescents shows at The Key Club, and I was talking to one guy. I think his name is Joey Victim, and he said, "Hey, dude, I've got a new band and we want to be like you, real old school and everything."

**Mike:** If you look at the Adolescents, they were adolescent when they produced their best stuff. I'm just saying this because I'm part of booking these guys. A lot of the bookers, the people who are paying the bands, have crossed their wires. Kids produce great shit before they're twenty-one. That's just the way it is. There's such a lack of venues out there that are all ages and that's ridiculous.

**Anthony:** I just have one more question for all these people who say all the old bands are the best and anything new sucks, all the people who think kids are crap because they're kids: How old were you when you got into punk? How old were you when you started your band when you were listening to punk?

**Lisa:** How long do you think the band is going to be around?

**Dante:** Five, ten, fifteen, twenty years

**Drew:** However long it takes. I'm not planning to go off to college. I'm planning to stay around here.

**Dante:** I'm going to go to college, but I'm going to stay around here. I'm not going to go off to Chicago or something.

**Anthony:** I'll play until I die, and if my fingers are too arthritic to play guitar, I'll sing. And if I can't sing because my voice has been removed from whatever—if it's cancer, everything is going to give you cancer—if I can't even do that, I'll just produce people. I'm going to do this music until I die or off myself or whatever. However I die, it doesn't matter.

**Dante:** Get a talk box. Then you can sound like those guys on the commercials.

# TOP FIVES

## RAZORCAKE STAFF

### Adrian Salas

*Top Five Potential Songs for the Hardcore Band Vince Was Reluctant to Try to Start with Me*

5. "Drowning in BRUTALITY!"
4. "N.Y.H.C. Pride L.A. '09!"
3. "Stabbed in the Back... from Behind!"
2. "Close! The! GAAAAAATE!!!"  
(A song in honor of leaving Razorcake HQ in the evening.)
1. "Mosh Away My Tears"

### Art Ettinger

- Razorblade, *Dutch Steel: The Best of Razorblade 2001-2009* CD
- The Spits, *Vol. IV* LP
- The Apers, *You Are Only as Strong as the Table You Dance On* LP
- The Casualties, *We Are All We Have* LP
- Pinhead Gunpowder, *Kick over the Traces* LP

### Ben Snakepit

1. Wild America, demo tape
2. Dear Landlord, *Dream Homes* CD
3. Serious Tracers, live (check their myspace)
4. Pinhead Gunpowder, *Kick Over the Traces* CD
5. I need to get out of Texas and see some new bands! I'll see ya at Fest 8!

### Bill Pinkel

5. Used Kids, *Yeah No* (Thank you Ifyoumakeit.com)
4. Vaginasore Jr., *This Here Peninsula* LP
3. John Hughes (RIP)
2. Muy Autentico & Traffic Street Records
1. Dancing to Shang-A-Lang at my wedding

### Billups Allen

- Top 5 Bands That Distinctly Changed Their Sound and Continued to Put Out Good Albums*
1. The Beatles
  2. The Makers
  3. The Bell-Rays
  4. D.R.I.
  5. The Registrars

### Chris Peigler

1. Finally Punk, *Casual Goths* LP
2. White Lung, *Local Garbage* 7"

3. I Object, *America Today* 7"
4. Government Warning, *Paranoid Mess* LP
5. The Absentees, *Illegal Listening Device: 1979-2000* CD

### Chris Pepus

- Top 5 John Cassavetes Films*  
(after seeing the Cassavetes retrospective at Webster University)
1. *The Killing of a Chinese Bookie*
  2. *A Woman under the Influence*
  3. *Faces*
  4. *Husbands*
  5. *Opening Night*

### Corinne

- Top 5 Punk Moments with My Mom*
1. My mom on the guest list for Radon at Fest 6.
  2. Hearing reports from FL while I lived in SF that my mom was at the David Dondero show.
  3. Seeing her wearing her Tim Version shirt.
  4. Eating pizza with us at Fest 5 at 4AM.
  5. Listening to Cheap Girls with my mom in her last days and her telling me she liked it.

### Cristy C. Road

- Top Five Songs to Force Depression into Mania in the Summer of 2009*
5. "That's The Way I Want It," Tina and The Total Babes
  4. "No Reason," Against All Authority
  3. "Fast Car," 20/20
  2. "Your Love," The Outfield
  1. "Westside Highway," Pinhead Gunpowder

### Craven Rock

5. *Seven Miles a Second*, by David Wojnarowicz (out of print, but worth hunting down)
4. *The Roaming Heart: So What?* #8 (zine)
3. *Nardwuar: Welcome to My Castle*
2. Olytopia camp at Autonomous Mutant Festival
1. Rejoining a DIY creative community in the Northwest/old buddies in Seattle, WA

### Craig Horky

1. The Menzingers, *A Lesson in the Abuse of Information Technology*
2. GDP, *Realistic Expectations*
3. Mario Bourzac
4. Spanish Gamble
5. Bad ideas and poor decisions

### CT Terry

1. Fresh-O-Matics 7"
2. Little Gold EP
3. Red Arlington, *The Long Weekend* EP
4. *Fletch*, the movie and book.
5. Finished that novel draft.

### Daryl Gussin

- Reigning Sound, *Love and Curses*, tie with Future Virgins, *Easiest Years* 7"
- Blind Shake and Michael Yonkers LP + live, tie with The Shitty Limits, *Beware the Limits* LP + live
- In Disgust, *Reality Choke* 10" + live, tie with the Ultra Twist, *Lurch Loves to Shimmy!* 7" + live
- Government Warning, *Paranoid Mess* LP, tie with Spits *IV* LP
- The Gateway District, *Some Days You Get the Thunder* LP, tie with Hex Dispensers, *Winchester Mystery House* LP

### Dave Disorder

- 5 Things Not Likely To Happen Anytime Soon in My Life*
1. I stop drinking
  2. I get a real job
  3. I start hanging out with some "normal" folks
  4. I go to an AA or NA meeting sober
  5. The new Tiltwheel record comes out

### Dave Williams

- Top 5 Reasons Fest 8 Will Rule*
1. Radon!
  2. American Steel!
  3. Hanging with fellow Razorcakers
  4. Going to Florida after the rainiest summer in Ottawa history
  5. Innumerable other awesome things (I'd also like to acknowledge that I had 6 items in last issue's Top 5s because I am a moron. Thanks to whomever for changing numbers to bullets on that one)

### Designated Dale

- 10-10-09. I'm one hell of a lucky guy.
- Mustasch, one of Sweden's finest rock'n'roll exports: [www.mustasch.net](http://www.mustasch.net)
- *True Blood* on HBO.
- [www.dontevenreply.com](http://www.dontevenreply.com). If you don't laugh, you obviously have no sense of humor. This guy's great.
- The Zeros bringing back the rock to the Troubadour on 07-16-09. Viva Chula Vista!

### Evan Katz

1. Old Speckled Hen beer
2. Not smoking.
3. Themselves live at Spaceland
4. "This American Life" podcasts
5. Big Business, "Mind the Drift"

### Ever Velasquez

- Manny Ramirez pinch hit grand slam off the first pitch into Mannywood on Manny's bobble-head night!
- Ill Repute & Social Unrest @ Alex's Bar
- Off With Their Heads @ Angelo's
- The Zeros @ The Troubadour
- The Classics Of Love @ the Blue Star

### Jake Shut

1. Leatherwolf, the little brown bat that slept in my bedroom window this summer
2. The Paper Chase, *Someday This Could All Be Yours*
3. Dear Landlord, *Dream Homes*
4. The Future Of The Left, *Travels with Myself and Another*
5. Bottle Rockets, *Lean Forward*

### Jeff Proctor

- Top 5 Onion Headlines, Following It's "Buy-Out" By Yu-Wan-Mei Fish Salvagery*
1. Selfless Jason Kendall Sacrifices Bunt, Self For Good Of Team, Advancement Of Runners
  2. Grandfather Disrespected In Own Home
  3. Area Man Uninterested In Creating A Better Community Even Though This May Benefit Him In The Long Run
  4. Paul Reiser, Benevolent Possessor Of Many American Hearts, Looking To Direct
  5. Selfish Couple Lives In Studio Apartment Large Enough For 34

### Jennifer Federico

- Top 5 Cool Things about a Quick Trip to London*
1. Hanging out with Sharky!
  2. Butterfly Jungle at the Museum of Natural History
  3. Surviving the bogan pub crawl not only intact, but, dare I say it, with decorum
  4. City cruise on the Thames (Execution dock! The Mayflower!)
  5. Greenwich flea markets

### Jimmy Alvarado

- Funky Four Plus One More*  
(no particular order)
- Razorcake's 50<sup>th</sup> issue celebration/benefit: No one rocks a Batgirl suit like Toby.
  - *Invisible Man*, by Ralph Ellison: Took me two decades to finally read it, but was worth the wait.
  - Invisible Animals live at the Knitting Factory 7/17/09: Loud, art-damaged, hypnotic, and a buncha other adjectives for a helluva band.
  - X-Mal Deutschland, *Tocsin* CD: An oldie from a band that loves the gray area between Cocteau Twins and Siouxsie & the Banshees

# "Mosh Away My Tears"



• Filmin', DJin', podcastin', playin', and writin': The virtues of each are obvious, methinks.

#### Joe Dana

1. Off With Their Heads, Dear Landlord, and Underground Railroad to Candyland at the Blue Star
2. Dear Landlord, *Dream Homes* (You know a record is good when you have to force yourself to stop listening to it)
3. Commemorating my thirty-second birthday by having my band play in the living room (The cops shut us down right before we were going to start to suck.)
4. Todd "Sticky Fingers" Taylor returning my Razorcake Beer Koozie. I almost called the cops, but they were busy busting up house shows.
5. Starting each week climbing up one of Los Angeles's steepest streets (Eldred Street) and admiring the view of the neighborhood.

#### Joe Evans III

- Dear Landlord, *Dream Homes* CD
- Nightbirds, demo CD
- Scharpling And Wurster, *At the Speed of Sound* CD
- John Coltrane
- Thelonious Monk

#### Josh Benke

- The Yolks, self-titled LP
- The Box Elders, *Alice and Friends* LP and live—"Is that Chris Cattar or Jonathan Richman on drums?"
- Cococoma, *Ask, Don't Tell 7"*
- The Smith Westerns, self-titled LP
- Hangin' with Billy Pepperoni in Chicago on Ferris Nobunny's Day Off.

#### Juan Espinosa

1. Hunx And His Punx: *Teardrops on My Telephone* EP and live
2. Deep Sleep and Psyched To Die, live
3. Fy Fan: *Ah Nej* EP
4. The Arrivals/Grabass Charlestons Sister Series EPs
5. XBrainiax, CDR

#### Keith Rosson

- The Gateway District, *Sometimes You Get the Thunder* CD
- Make Do And Mend, *Bodies of Water* CD
- Empty Grave, *Abandoned* LP
- Various Artists, *Dangerous Intersections, Vol. III 7"*
- Trujaca Fala cassette label

#### Kurt Morris

1. Sudoku
2. *Welcome to Flavor Country* #18
3. Seeing old friends in Indiana and Seattle
4. The Story podcasts
5. My blog: [welcometoflavorcountry.wordpress.com](http://welcometoflavorcountry.wordpress.com)

#### Lauren Denitzio

##### Top Five Bands I Just Started Listening to Constantly

1. Dark Dark Dark (waltzing seafaring-ish songs with accordion involved. Amazing.)
2. Grass Widow (girls sounding like the Raincoats and ruling)
3. Zombie Dogs (all-female hardcore!)
4. Dos Tornos (melodic punk; drum-guitar duo)
5. Hurray For The Riff Raff (sweet, loud folk)

#### Lisa Weiss

##### Top 5 Songs about Taking a Job in Guatemala Because I Couldn't Find One in the States

- "In America," The Fastbacks
- "Born to Love Volcanoes," The Dead Milkmen
- "An American Girl," Crash Kills Four
- "Bored with You Esse," Manic Hispanic
- "Nowhere Is My Home," The Tim Version

#### Maddy

##### Top 5 Presents I Got on My Birthday!

1. Children's Bible Trivia Game! (Actual slogan: Where the trivia isn't trivial.) One of my favorite questions: "How do you spell Satan?"
2. Getting taken on a surprise trip to a teddy bear-themed drive-in diner called the Peppermint Twist, complete with an outdoor '60s jukebox and an official "dancing area!"
3. A stuffed animal from my sister in Russia, named Mels (which stands for Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin—and yes—some Russians actually named their children Mels. Ridiculous!)
4. A France Gall record! (Note: amazing '60s French pop record)
5. An actual Young Pioneers hat and flag! Punk rock!

#### Matt Average

1. Resist Control, demo
2. Cat Party, *Tar & Feathers* LP
3. Hjertestop, *Aarh Fuck...* EP, and *Vi Ses I Helvede...* LP
4. Judas Priest, live at Universal Amphitheater
5. Bloodhorse, *Horizoner* CD

#### Mike Faloan

1. Pax Nicholas, *Pax Nicholas and the Netley Family* LP (Daptone)
2. Night Birds CDEP (self-released)
3. Psyched To Die, *Sterile Walls 7"* EP (Grave Mistake/Firestarter)
4. Skipper, *Cold Pizza and Pop 7"* EP (Chocolate Covered)
5. Young Fresh Fellows, *I Think This Is* CD (Yep Roc)

#### Mike Frame

1. Rhino Bucket, *Hardest Town* CD
2. New York Dolls, *Cause I Sez So* CD
3. Reigning Sound, *Love and Curses* CD
4. Motley Crüe, *Too Fast for Love* LP
5. Dinosaur Jr, *Farm* CD

#### Mr. Z's

##### Top 5 DIY Do-gooders (in no particular order)

- CaliMucho.net
- Indiepit
- Razorcake
- Double Down Radio
- Kraftworks Publishing

#### Nardwuar The Human Serviette

1. *Mongrel* Fanzine #6
2. Tunnel Canary, *Jihad* CD (amazing 1978 Vancouver noise punk!)
3. *Sonic Boom: The History of Northwest Rock* Book by Peter Blecha
4. Pretty Vanilla, *7inches Deep 7"* EP
5. Michael Rault And The Mixed Signals, *Sure Are Fun* CD

#### NL Dewart

##### Top 5 Favorite Suburban Home Bands

1. The Gamits
2. Adventures Of Jet
3. The Fairlanes
4. Jon Snodgrass
5. Love Me Destroyer

#### Nighthawk

1. The Methadones blowing up the sound board at the Old Creepy Crawl in 2004. (D4 had to wait for another one to play their set.)
2. Phillip from Teen Idols letting a kid play guitar on "Porno Shop" at the Old Creepy Crawl in 1999.
3. Mike from Blanks 77 walking off stage mid-set at the Galaxy in 1999. (Renee had to go get him and walk him back on stage.)
4. Weird Al calling his parents over the PA and having the crowd wish them a happy anniversary at the old glory amphitheatre at Six Flags in 1999.
5. J.J. from the Nobodys jumping off stage to break up a fight while the band continued to cover "Whole Lotta Nosie" at Fireside Bowl in 1999. (He got back on stage and finished the tune.)

#### Rene Navarro

- Jawbreaker, *24 Hour Revenge Therapy*
- Bruce Springsteen, *The Rising*
- Conner Oberst & The Mystic valley Band, *Deep South*
- Deep Sleep, *Three Things at Once*
- Coliseum, *Goddamage*

#### Rev. Nørh

- Underthings, *Big Hits* CD
- Nobunny, *Raw Romance* cassette
- Thee Makeout Party, self-titled LP
- King Tuff, *Was Dead* LP
- Bobby Ubangi, *Inside the Mind of Bobby Ubangi* LP

#### Rhythm Chicken

##### Top 5 Bands at Insubordination Fest '09

1. KEPI the Band.
2. Dillinger Four
3. Jetty Boys
4. Beatnik Termites

5. Boris the Sprinkler & Pansy Division (tie) (Now that Joel from MTX is aboard the Starship Pansy Division, it's a whole new ballgame... so to speak.)

#### Ryan Horky

1. Unsinkable Molly Brown, *A Handful of Songs* CDEP
2. Naked Raygun, *Basement Screams* LP
3. Hombrinus Dudes/Merkit, split LP
4. Pharaoh Sanders, *Karma* CD
5. Gang Of Four, *Entertainment!* LP

#### Samantha Beerhouse

##### Top 5 Reasons

1. Summer '09 *Has Kicked Ass*
1. Learning to make caipirinhas
2. Dear Landlord, URTC, and Off With Their Heads @ the Blue Star, 8/24/09
3. Starting to help out the Razorcake crew
4. Delicious al pastor taco cart opened on my street (I can see it from the porch!)
5. North Park Awesome Fast (this is a prediction, but a shrewd guess, nonetheless)

#### Sean Koepenick

##### Top 5 shows on Boomerang

1. *Thundarr the Barbarian*
2. *Birdman*
3. *Huckleberry Hound*
4. *Atom Ant*
5. *Banana Splits*

#### Steve Larder

##### Top 5 Lines in Terminator 2

1. "I know now why you cry, but it's something I could never do."
2. "Your foster parents are dead."
3. "Say, that's a nice bike."
4. "Take a hike, dickwad."
5. "I need your clothes, your boots, and your motorcycle."

#### Todd Taylor

- Reigning Sound, *Love and Curses* LP
- Future Virgins, *Easiest Years 7"*
- Hex Dispensers, *Winchester Mystery House* LP
- Dear Landlord, *Dream Homes* LP
- Sick Sick Birds, *Heavy Manners* LP

#### Ty Stranglehold

##### Top Five "J" Bands

1. JFA
2. Jerk Ward
3. Jabbers
4. Jesus Lizard
5. Jawbreaker

#### Vince Battilana

- Songs For Moms, *I Used to Believe in the West* LP
- Pig Heart Transplant, *Hope You Enjoy Heaven* LP + 7"
- Charles Albright And The Colonels CD-R and 7" that he sent to me. Thanks!
- Hummingbird Of Death, *Show Us the Meaning of Haste* LP
- Ecoli, *Judas Cradle 7"*



## 100 DAMNED GUNS:

### **Musica de Tormento: CD**

When Mitch Clem told me to check out 100 Damned Guns over a year ago, I filed the name away with the dozens of bands people tell me I'm totally going to love. I figured they'd fall somewhere in the broad genre of alt.country, maybe cowpunk with some mandolin or Dobro thrown on top. When I got a copy of *Musica de Tormento*, their first full-length album, I was completely blown away: solid, well-written country songs—real country, you understand, neither preservationist old-timey tunes nor the slick pop country of today's radio, and just barely falling under the "alt" tag in its honest simplicity. Sure, the fact that all the members were previously in punk, garage, or metal bands does come through occasionally. The track "Red River Valley" probably gets the punkiest, picking up the speed with a fast, solid drumbeat, but it's immediately followed by "Hard Row to Hoe," which I have every intention of playing for my dad (a confessed CMT addict). In essence, 100 Damned Guns is country and western music—and they've been named C&W Band of the Year in their hometown of Fort Worth, Texas, two years running. They've played bluegrass festivals, shared bills with Wayne "The Train" Hancock, and recorded with The Marked Men. The only way out is up. To put it succinctly: I love this album. —Sarah Shay (TXMF)

## 29<sup>th</sup> STREET DISCIPLES:

### **Self-titled: CD**

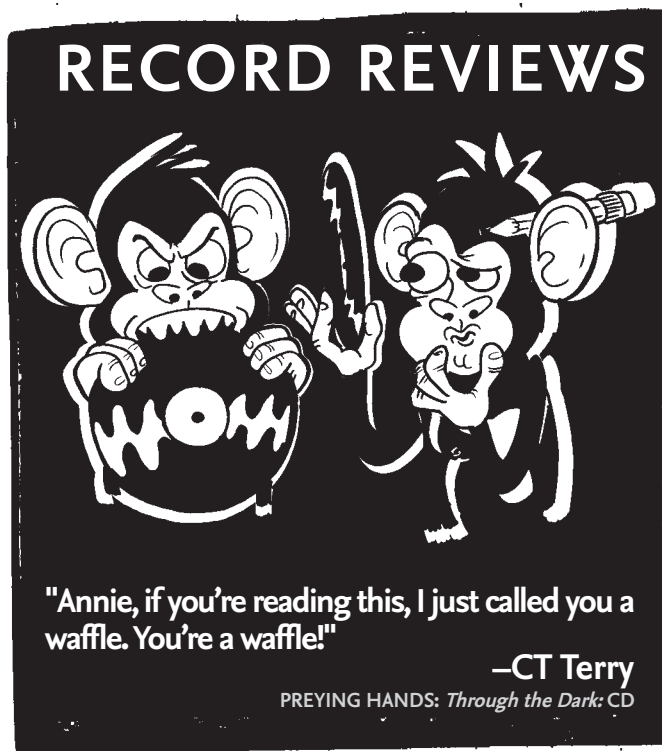
At the four second mark of the first tune, I looked at the back of this to see if it was a Zodiac Killer release and, sure enough, it was. As has come to be expected from that label, this is loud, raucous rock/punk stuff sure to tickle the fancy of anyone who thinks bands like Speeddealer, Zeke, or the like are nifty. —Jimmy Alvarado (zodiackillerrecords.com)

## 97-SHIKI: Self-titled: Tape

This is some type of technical, slightly funky, emo/indie sort of thing. I have a feeling fans of Level Plane Records or Troubleman Unlimited would find a whole lot to like here. The label is from Malaysia and it is cool that the folks over there can get their hands on this if they dig it. Features ex-members of My Lai and He Who Corrupts. —Mike Frame (Revulsion, revulsionrecords.blogspot.com)

## ADD/C/ LANDLORD: Split 7"

ADD/C are one of those bands that I would have killed to be hip to when I was just getting into DIY punk. Two



rough'n'tumble, sloppy-yet-sturdy punk songs that reek of wide-eyed nights and blurry mornings. So pissed, so catchy. You gotta love good punk that's played by dudes who look like they work at a gas station. On the other side, Landlord contribute three stripped-down tunes; kinda college rock, but on the punker side of the spectrum. Solid stuff, but the vocals remind me a little too much of that schmutz from Bright Eyes. —Daryl (Plan-It-X South)

## AGAINST ME!

### **The Original Cowboy: CD**

The question isn't whether or not this is a good album. I liked *As the Eternal Cowboy* just fine when it came out back in 2003. It was catchy and it seemed like they were singing about important stuff like being passionate and shit. The question with me is whether *The Original Cowboy* is really necessary. The deal with this CD is that it's the release of the demo tracks the band made for *As the Eternal Cowboy*, but I can't really tell the difference at all. The sound quality isn't noticeably different, there weren't really any major changes in the lyrics or song structures between the demos and finished product, and it's not all that sloppier or tighter than what the band eventually put down for the finished album. Don't lose any sleep about not getting this if you already

own *As the Eternal Cowboy*, unless you're an Against Me! completist. This feels like bonus tracks in search of a deluxe reissue. If you're new to Against Me!, this album wouldn't be a bad first pick to be introduced with, though, as it's basically *As the Eternal Cowboy* with different packaging. —Adrian (Fat)

## AIRES AND GRACES:

### **What Happened to the Kids?: 7"**

It seems like I'm reviewing at least one Longshot record in every issue. Trust me, I don't mind in the least. There are some great bands on the label and Aires And Graces seem to fit in just fine with the likes of Alternate Action and Harrington Saints: straight-forward street punk that's played well. I was a little shocked to find a standard black vinyl record in the sleeve. I guess I've been getting used to the wacky colored vinyl that Longshot has been throwing around on their last few releases. I should also mention that as much as I dig the tunes, I've gotta say "Better Dead Than Red"? Really? It would seem apparent to me that America has bigger problems than communism. —Ty Stranglehold (Longshot)

## AK-77 / DEATH STATISTIC: Split: 7"

As they say on *The Antiques Roadshow*, it's the provenance—the

documented story—that increases the value of a piece. On the surface, AK-77 is serviceable tongue-in-cheek oi (along the lines of Oil!). Death Statistic provides roughly recorded songs played at home. Their band name / logo takes a bit of time to visually decipher, so I'm saying they're going for something along the lines of Bathory or Entombed, but don't hold me to that, since my time in those dark corners are limited. What this 7" is really about is an audio tribute to a Ukrainian punk—who had formed both bands—and died before his twenty-first birthday. And in that context, it's oddly sweet that making fun of bald xenophobes and sidling up to dudes who prove their commitment by burning churches is this guy's swan song. —Todd (Do Ya Hear We)

## BASEBALL FURIES:

### **Throw Them to the Wolves: CD**

Fucking bad times. Terrible, angry, frustrating times. Moments of seething, uncontrollable hatred and animosity. Supposedly, this is the Baseball Furies last album, and it just sounds like they don't want to be anywhere near each other. And it works so well with this type of grimy garage rock. Imagine the fucked-for-life tones of Vee Dee's *Further* LP mixed with Eddy Current Suppression Ring's *Primary Colours* LP and you're on the right track for *Throw Them to the Wolves*. It's captivating and prodding—all while oscillating tempos—yet never losing its intensity. Plus the album was recorded by Bob Weston. —Daryl (Big Neck)

## BATTLEFIELDS:

### **Thresholds of Imbalance: CD**

Mathmetal. Perhaps this stuff is the offspring of doom metal? This has its moments, however brief, but, on the whole, this album is boring. The songs jam on and on without much that's really dynamic or interesting happening. Every so often, there will be something, like an atmospheric guitar bleeding through, and a pensive piano interlude, but that's about it. The dual crustcore, or gindcore, vocals remind me of all the shitty bands I've seen playing the L.A. circuit in recent years. A lot of screaming and growling, and yet so blah. The songs speed up, then slow down and begin meandering and meandering some more, and when it's done, it's pretty uneventful. If I was stoned listening to this, then I would probably find this irritating. —M.Avr (Translation Lost, translationloss.com)

## BE MY DOPPELGANGER:

### **Sonic Annihilation: 7"**

Important Literary Notice: As of this morning, it has become apparent to

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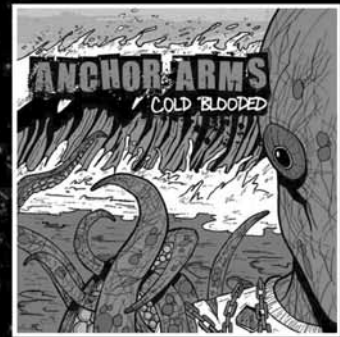
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me that The Ergs! have supplanted Screeching Weasel and the Queers in contemporary punk rock referencing! To wit, a zine I was reading late last night included a *footnote* to the Ergs! And now this lyric: "I think you've probably heard the Ergs before/You said I play them all the time." And although studies show that it's not scientifically possible for me to like Screeching Weasel more ("Your levels might be considered dangerous by some researchers," the study leader told me. "But still, I say, 'Go for it.' I love *My Brain Hurts*, too!"), I am wholeheartedly in favor of this paradigm shift! I love the Ergs! And now, to the matter at hand: This is really good pop punk, two boy singers, a song about a pizza party, and, guess what? One of their songs reminds me of, dare I say it, the Ergs! You should like this band! Maybe you already like this band! If this were a cereal, it would be Apple Jacks! And I think this band could very well someday reach the Corn Pops level! Seriously! —Maddy (It's Alive)

#### BEAR PROOF SUIT:

##### **A Suit to Alter Fate—2005-2008: CD**

There are two covers that I recognized on this CD and those are Hüsker Dü's "Real World" and Poison Idea's "Pure Hate." Describing these guys as sitting in the middle ground between early Hüsker Dü and early Poison Idea, with a sprinkling of Canada's Subhumans, is a really apt summation of how these guys sound. They play really

frantic hardcore of the '80s variety. The guitars, drums, and bass work are totally capable of shredding, should the band choose. More than once there are guitar lines and bass riffs on here that grab my attention and make me pay attention. The band keeps this sound fresh. Bear Proof Suit actually sounds desperate, angry, frantic, and not just like a bunch of aging punks going through the motions while harping on the sounds of a couple generations ago. There's often a danger of a band trying to play hardcore like this sounding like they're serving up the hardcore equivalent of microwaved leftovers, but, thankfully, that's not at all the case here. This is a discography CD that includes the tracks from the band's 2008 LP *B.Y.O.B.O.C.*, two 7"s, and a few unreleased tracks. Pretty damn good. —Adrian (Urban Pirate)

#### BEAVERS: *Silly Girls: 7"*

I remember this band from the mid-'90s when they released several singles but am surprised to see they are still around. It's good, solid garage punk of the Crypt and Estrus style but with a fun and rockin' undercurrent that many of those bands lacked. Fans of the Devil Dogs, Rip Offs or others of the style will find a lot to like here. The band appears to be from the Netherlands and the single is limited to five hundred copies. —Mike Frame (Frantic City)

#### BLACK TIME / TY SEGALL: Split: LP

Your eyes do not deceive you: this is

a split LP—so essentially this album contains an EP's worth of material from both Black Time and Ty Segall. (I know Tito Larriva of the Plugz used to do releases like this one back in the day on his Fatima label, but I don't know too many people doing it currently.) Black Time, you kids know these Brits (plus one American on bass)—real lo-fi, like Electric Eels, Crime, and Rocket From The Tombs. Visceral. The treble assault fucks you hard—not Throbbing Gristle hard, but enough to make you think twice about leaving that volume knob above five. Lemmy and the gang are coming hard on this one; some of the slower stuff on *Double Negative* seems like a distant memory. Subject matter remains the same—like Herbert Marcuse, Caution still can't deal with Late Capitalism (and while not quite hitting it with the acuteness of Andy Gill), "Contract" seems to capture the same frustrations the Clash had with CBS ("Complete Control")—the precise moment of cognition when a band realizes it's nothing but a commodity to a record label. While I wholeheartedly back this EP, I feel some of the more experimental moments on last year's *Double Negative* were incredibly promising ("Backwards in Black"); I'm hoping Black Time will follow up on these tracks in the future. But anyway, LONG LIVE BLACK TIME! Ty Segall—I don't know this kid, but I like what I'm hearing from him (fans of Black Time will be more than happy with his tracks). Lo-fi surf guitar. Solid

stuff. (I dig the album cover, too. Black Time's side has two European kids standing in front of a Bauhaus-inspired building, staring at a duck. Alienating and troubling. The kids seem fine with prefabricated housing, yet perplexed by nature.) —Ryan Leach (Telephone Explosion, telephoneexplosion.com)

#### BOYS CLUB: Self-titled: LP

I won't pretend to be an expert on all things power pop. But if there's one thing I've noticed about the current wave of bands is that more often than not, the "power" is overshadowed by the wardrobe. Boys Club, however, keep it simple (both musically and fashionably.) They play shoestring budget power pop with more of a nod to the punk side of things. Each and every song sounds like it belongs on a single or EP. Not just that, but a single I would listen to frequently. Great job. —Juan Espinosa (Three Dimensional)

#### BREWTALE THIRST: *Unquenchable: CD*

I think every town has a band like these guys. Slightly older guys who enjoy Motörhead and drinking and have probably gone through a Gregg Allman-like amount of marriages. Dudes who sound like Fear and wear their own T-shirts, not in an exercise of self-promotion, but because that was what was within reach when they drunkenly stumbled out of bed that morning. It may sound like I'm not talking about the actual music in this review, but you'd be wrong. This CD is the aural equivalent of those things.

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I think the world needs those things.  
—Ryan Horky (Wet Brain)

#### BUGS, THE: *Self-titled: CD*

When I went to a Queers show recently, I saw this disc on their merch table. I wasn't really paying much attention to it, but the fact that it was five bucks led me to flip it over and read the song titles. SOLD! With song titles like "Back on the Weed," "I Wish I Was A Mexican," and the deal-sealing "Dave Navarro's Goatee Fucking Sucks," I knew I had to have it. It turns out that current Queers' bass player Dangerous Dave is the leader of these yahoos and you can hear the influences. Imagine most of the Queers' "Beach Boys-iness" stripped away to reveal a scrappy, drug-fueled heart with feelings for lesbians and she-males and not working. I listened to this at maximum volume ten or twelve times in a row (I think some of my co-workers were starting to get upset) and couldn't get enough. If you are like me and think that the world needs someone to take up the mantle of the Nobodys, then The Bugs are for you! —Ty Stranglehold (World)

#### BULLET TREATMENT: *Designated Vol.1: 7"*

This is some serious hardcore punk rock here. I hate that I have to add the "punk rock" on the end of that statement, but these days if I just wrote "hardcore," it would probably conjure up images of muscle jocks with full sleeve tattoos and basketball jerseys playing thinly veiled metal. Nope, this

record isn't that at all. This is anger and urgency. It's aggression. It's mind-blowingly good. The thing I find really interesting about this record is that each song is sung by a different vocalist, yet it doesn't affect the overall sound of the band. I'm gonna have to search out some of their other releases, I think. —Ty Stranglehold (Fat)

#### CAT PARTY: *Tar & Feathers: LP*

Not the usual stuff from Flat Black. Cat Party have a definite early-to-mid-'80s U.K. post-punk sound. Sort of like early U2 (they used to be good!) mixed with a band like Chameleons UK. The music is cold and dark, yet driving. There's a detachment in the vocals, and a sense of despair. What hooks me in with this is the guitar and bass. The bass is solid and pushes the songs forward, while the guitar creates the mood. "Dead Weight" is perhaps one of the mellower songs on this album, but maybe the best cut in an album with no filler tracks. The guitar is syrupy and lush, the vocals are haunting, and the bass and drums direct the experience without being overbearing. These guys pull the sound off quite well. Listening to this gives me the same charged feeling I experienced when I first heard bands like the Cure, Felt, even U2 some twenty-seven or more years ago. It sounds fresh and alive. —M.Avrq (Flat Black, [myspace.com/flatblackrecords](http://myspace.com/flatblackrecords))

**CENTERHITS, THE: *City Girl Friend: 7" EP***  
Five rockin' punk blasts with male and female vocals. The Centerhits, a

Japanese three piece, don't let up with their poppy rockers. At first, I was kinda thinkin' that they sounded like early Donnas, but more rockin', more punk, and actually good (and have a male singer, too). Then I realized that nothing could make the Donnas this good, so I abandoned that thought. Could they be the Japanese Soviettes if they got another member? Yes, possibly. Their lyrics are about, well, it's not always clear. I'm not sure that I can get my head around what, e.g., "She won't know her head is banbanbeef" is supposed to convey; but, I do know that "Make you disco!" is meant to be a threat (as well it should be). Despite the indecipherability of some of their lyrics, this 7" is pretty damn good. I'm beginning to think that Snuffy Smiles should consider offering 7" subscriptions. Just about everything that comes from 'em is pretty rad. —Vincent (Snuffy Smiles)

#### CHROMOSOMES, THE / THE TARJAS: *Split: 7"*

This is a pretty rockin' little split on blue vinyl. The Tarjas sing all in Finnish, including a really cool Finnish cover of "The KKK Took My Baby Away." I have no idea what they're saying in the other songs, but they're all pretty fun pop punk. The Chromosomes sing in English and it's a slightly harder-edged pop punk, but I like them too. —Ryan Horky (Killer, [myspace.com/kilrec](http://myspace.com/kilrec))

**COBRA SKULLS: *American Rubicon: CD***  
Oh man, someone at Razorcake HQ is stalking me. I've been complaining

about this band for the last month or so. It's not that they're bad, it's that every time I hear a song, I think "What Against Me! song is this?" However, when the singer sings in his native tongue, Spanish, it sounds *amazing*. I want a whole record of that. But no one ever does a whole record in non-English anymore. Lame. —Bryan Static (Red Scare)

#### CONTROL: *Hooligan Rock'n'Roll: CD*

When I put this on at work today, one of my co-workers instantly asked if it was Exploited. Before I could answer, he followed with, "No, these guys can actually play." That more or less sums it up. Control play some rockin', old-style British punk rock with good songs and quality production. Why reinvent the wheel if you can just make it roll smoother, right? I liked this. —Ty Stranglehold (Step 1)

#### CRASH NORMAL: *Finger Shower: 10"*

Eight songs of Parisian garage art. The sheer amount of treble is hypnotic, the shards of guitar bring Big Black to mind, the sullen, drawled vocals owe a thing or two to Mark E. Smith of The Fall, and it sounds like there's a drum machine ticking away under all of the tinfoil-chewing white noise. I picture this band living in a warehouse, and if I went over there and said, "Hey guys, it's a nice afternoon. Let's go outside!" they'd all light smokes at the same time and go, "No. We're nihilists," then go back to throwing cinderblocks and skronking the day

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away. —CT Terry (Rijapov, myspace.com/rjapovrecords)

**DARK AGES: *Vicious Lie EP: 7"***

Mosh pit mayhem! This band is a god damn circle pit and a half: raw, fast, momentous hardcore from Kansas City, Missouri. Someone told me that this band listens to a lot of experimental music. And that totally makes sense. It gives them that edge to take their brand of furious early hardcore to the next level. Keeping it angry, innovative, and explosive. "Freedom of choice is a compromise, just another vicious lie." —Daryl (Cowabunga)

**DEAD MECHANICAL: *"Binghamton Calling" b/w "Leave It Alone": 7"***

Isolated from the rest of their catalog, slower Dead Mechanical songs like "Binghamton Calling" owe a lot to Jawbreaker: poetic, sweetly bleak, full of reflective depth. "Leave It Alone" has sixteen words (excluding who ohs), and comes out like the quick, bright bubbles of Superchunk. The funny thing is I've never thought of these two bands when listening to previous Dead Mechanical 7"s or their highly recommended full-length, *Medium Noise*. One of my favorite current bands. —Todd (Dead Mechanical)

**DEAD PANIC: Demo: CDEP**

The likes of Cancer Bats and Gallows, Dead Panic walks the line between metal and hardcore. I would have enjoyed this more if the guitar structures were a bit more melodic, instead of just

a wall of noise, and if the lyrics were less vague so I could know what I was raging against. Or maybe ambiguity is what they're aiming for? Still, these are good tracks to pit to even though they sound like they're missing a double-bass kick. —Kristen K. (Self-released)

**DEAD UNICORN:**

***Yellowstone Supervolcano: CD***

How's this for original? A concept album about a volcano in Yellowstone National Park erupting and destroying life. That means no more Yogi Bear! Wait, Yogi lives in Jellystone. Whew! However, Yellowstone is very real. So now I have to consider the possibility of a volcano fucking up the West Coast, and then there's talk that the Mayans predicted the end of the world in 2012. G'damn, we're fucked either way. Dead Unicorn spread the fear and paranoia via a mix of grind and nü metal stylings. You can sing along in a tuneful manner, then growl in fear and anger over the fact your life is being cut short by a river of lava. —M.Avrq (Peterwalkee, peterwalkeerecords.com)

**DEAR LANDLORD: *Dream Homes: CD***

Being a disciple of Rivethead's entire catalog, the first several times I took *Dream Homes* around the track, I thought it was too easy for these dudes. A steady diet of Weasel and bad decisions? Check. Flawless harmonizing about being desperate, barely-not-homeless, backing sealed-with-wax watertight guitars? Check. One of the most purposeful drummers

in our world? Check. It sounded flawless, almost too well groomed. And when I think of these dudes I think of a lot of things, but "well groomed" is not on that list. (This is so not a dis.) But—and this is a large but—I found myself humming the songs days later. Not immediately. They had to bubble to the surface, through the layers of what at first seemed like a cake made purely of frosting. And like a familiar cat that you pet wrong just once, *Dream Homes* also has fangs and just-as-easy claws that slash unexpectedly and draw blood. *Dream Homes* is definitely pretty in its almost patentable punk pop, but it's not fully domesticated. It'd be a mistake to take familiarity of their sound for granted. This grew on me like crazy. —Todd (No Idea)

**DEATH BEFORE DISHONOR:**

***Our Glory Days: 7"***

Work with me here. Picture a Michael Madsen or Jean Claude Van Damme direct-to-video flick from 1999: one of those movies about the alcoholic, down-on-his-luck cop or ex-Special Forces guy who threw it all away to, I don't know, became a carpenter or something. This poor guy, he just wants to live the good life. But he's tormented by his past, right? And, well, he just needs the love of a good woman to put his demons to rest and set him free. Unfortunately, she's been captured by evil terrorists! He'll have to don his twin Uzis and body armor *one more time!* Does this sound predictable yet? Seem like you've heard it a million

times before? Well, welcome to Death Before Dishonor's latest. Three songs, in which they wax wistful about the glory days of their violent hardcore youth, gleefully wish drug addicts would hurry up and die, and cover everyone's favorite skinheads, The Bruisers. Fuck this dumbed-down, paint-by-numbers, predictable shit. —Keith Rosson (Bridge Nine)

**DIRTY FILTHY MUGS: *Half-Pint: CD***

I am so sick of the whole "yerdy, derdy-fiddly-dee" Irish punk thing. I get it. You're Irish, you're drunk, and you wanna fight. Throw in a ballad with an accordion and a tin-whistle and you could be the next big thing in the burgeoning punk rock subgenre of Lepracore. Lucky Charms this is not. —Ty Stranglehold (Brraapp, myspace.com/brraapprecords)

**DOPAMINES, THE:**

***The Soap and Lampshades: 7"***

When I opened this record, a tiny piece of paper dropped out. It said, in six-point font, "This record was stuffed by matt lame of SUCIDIE!! See SUCIDIE LIVE with guest guitarist Larry Livermore at the Insubordination Records Fest..." The lowly record stuffer strikes back, turning punk rock shit work into an unusual method of band promotion! Could other shit workers employ similar tactics? What if the next time you bought a pack of socks, instead of a sticker saying, "Inspected by #4," it said, "Check out my dad's auto shop at 1215 Main St."

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or maybe it could just say, "I hate this job. Think about it. Putting something into something else for hours? Really." So, thank you Matt Lame for stuffing this Copyrights-influenced record! The more I listen to it, the more I like it. It's got a bit of a Teenage Bottlerocket sound (without the ridiculous lyrics and not as catchy), but I imagine that this is the sort of record that I end up liking more a few months later. It this were a cereal, it'd be Frosted Flakes. You start off thinking that there are probably a lot of other better cereals, and, in fact, there are, but once you're eating it, you think, "Hey, this is actually really good!" —Maddy (Cold Feet)

#### ECOLI: *Judas Cradle: 7"*

From the first track, "Shut Up and Suffer," this 7" blasts through eight songs of maniacal auditory torture. Grueling, derogatory destruction of all things sacred and held dear by a culture that lacks any respect for non-conformity. It's odd ball punk rock played super fast and as hard as possible. Ecoli is the path that I felt the Harpoon Guns were on: pressing '80s throwback hardcore to the limits of reality while mixing their passion for aggressive punk music with being a goddamn weirdo. This record kills. —Daryl (Stress Domain)

#### ELEKTROLUX: *Self-titled: LP*

I like this, although I have a hard time putting my finger on exactly what genre of music it is. A French band from Marseille, they sing in English

and have short and interesting lyrics, to wit, "The Boy Aside": "& if I was Christ myself I wouldn't start any religion but stay home all day long eating food as praised in the TV commercials." Fantastic! The singer has a nice, deep voice, robust and appealing. On the first song on the second side, it almost reminds me a little of Mr. Jim Thirwell (also known as Clint Ruin, Foetus, etc.). They go through a couple different styles on the album; I sometimes hear a little Birthday Party influence, or maybe some Firewater, and the guitar in a couple of songs has an almost rockabilly feel. A female guest vocalist sings on a couple tracks and it's an interesting addition—makes the songs a little more screechy and punk. The bass is strong, and I bet they're really fun live. Dig it. —Jennifer Federico (Jojo, myspace.com/jojorecords)

#### EMPTY GRAVE: *Abandoned: LP*

Oh my God. What kind of alternate universe did this band come from? Who the fuck are these guys? Whatever smoking, other-worldly elixir they've managed to imbibe, it's apparently given em near-magical powers and the ability to channel everything that was cool and potent about '80s punk. I mean, I'm gonna drop some names here, okay? And let it be known that *Abandoned* is, in all seriousness, when taken purely as sonic artifact and without any of the nostalgic connections inherent in such name dropping, *nearly or just as good as the*

*following bands and records:* Attitude Adjustment's *American Paranoia*. Cryptic Slaughter's *Convicted*. Christ On Parade's *The Mind Is a Terrible Thing*. Are you getting me yet? Seamless and awesome and raw and totally unpretentious. If the album runs the risk of sounding dated, fuck it—personally, I could not give a flying shit if you wear your influences on your sleeve, as long as you bring something solid to the table. And I'm telling you, Empty Grave perfectly capture the audible equivalent of the bad old days: two terms under Reagan, Cold War terror, us versus them. Then they condense it onto one 45 rpm LP beautifully entrenched in punk rock from, say, 1986. Then they resoundingly kick you in the ass with it, over and over again. It takes a lot for me to give a glowing review, but I'll say this: if you care at all for straight-forward 1980s punk rock, I just cannot recommend this enough. *Worth seeking out.* —Keith Rosson (Absent)

#### ERGS!, THE: *The Ben Kweller EP: 12" EP*

I realize the delusion of such a thing, but I still do it. Whenever I drive down to San Pedro, I really hope for a statue of The Minutemen to greet me as the 110 turns into Gaffey. The times I've been to New Jersey, I half-expected ERGS! songs playing over the train terminal's loud speakers, to have the guys' disembodied heads on taxi ads, claiming "Welcome to the Garden State!" It's just because the music, to me, is rooted in that sense of place,

that it's wishful thinking that people in their own hometown would realize feats of true musical heroism. But I'm a realist, and the only monuments likely to built for the ERGS! will be these little vinyl disks, which hold up much better in the long run than the smaller shiny disk format this EP was originally released on several years back. The ERGS! are dead; just reconfirmed with Mikey when I saw *Psyched To Die*. Long live the ERGS! —Todd (Freedom School)

#### EVAPORATORS, THE / ANDREW W.K.: *A Wild Pair: Split: 7"*

White vinyl, sweet comics, sing-along choruses and electronic-infused powerpop rock tunes...Need I say more? Damn happy to add this fun split to my collection. —N.L. Dewart (Nardwuar)

#### EVIXION: *Strategic Cancellations: CD*

Crushing metal along the lines of bands like Kylesa and early Neurosis only slower, allowing for the heaviness to dominate. There are no ambient breaks or acoustic guitar interludes. This is all systems go, pummeling, and no where near being pleasant. Vocal chords are shredded, leaving the listener to wonder if there are polyps forming in this man's throat. The wall of guitar is never-ending. The low end rumbles. Despite the humorous artwork on the cover, and the fake T-shirt ads in the lyric sheet, this music is definitely not light hearted. It's dark, and with an air of

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hopelessness. —M.Avrq (Peterwalkee, peterwalkeerecords.com)

**FARMS IN TROUBLE:**  
**The Gas Station Soundtrack: CD**

Some serious Guided By Voices worship going on here. There are certainly worse bands to copy, but I wish this was GBV worship of the “we used a 4-track to record these great rock songs while we were drunk” variety and not the “this is such a copy that I had to check the liner notes to make sure Bob Pollard wasn’t involved in some way with this record” school. —Ryan Horky (Activities, Activitiesrecordings.com)

**FAST BOYS: Rock N Roll Trash: CD**

This album has fourteen songs that clock in at less than thirty-two minutes. This reminds me a lot of The Stitches but with *Guitar Hero*-sounding solos. There’s a fun cover of The Damned’s “New Rose” on the CD. All the music is as straightforward as it gets. It’s just good, old-fashioned, assaulting punk rock here. —N.L. Dewart (Zodiac Killer)

**FEUDS, THE: Square Go?: CD-R**

The Feuds are a Scottish punk/rock band a la The Black Keys or the Ramones. Each member even takes the last name Feud. And, like the Ramones, it’s catchy and a pleasant enough listen, but, unlike the Ramones, it didn’t cause me to want to sing any of their songs at karaoke. (I always dedicate “The KKK Took My Baby Away” to Black Nationalist Marcus

Garvey.) —Kurt Morris (myspace.com/the feudsvsthe world)

**FILTH: Live the Chaos: 7” EP**

Here’s the latest repressing of this sacrosanct 7”. This time, it is on Silver Sprocket (formerly? Springman), but the covers appear to be left over from Life Is Abuse (since the Life Is Abuse info lays where the Lookout! info once did). Though the covers might be old, the plates are new and the vinyl is transparent mucus green. I feel different about this than I when I first heard it. When I first heard this EP, I had the thought that the instrumentation was a bit slow for the vocal style. I have no idea why. Anyhow, I didn’t exactly get Filth the first time around. *Cheaper Than the Beer* (Blatz), on the other hand, I took to instantly. I picked up the majestic *Shit Split* on CD because of Blatz, but I fell in love with Filth. Whatever I thought was wrong with the four songs from this EP went out the window. In short, the songs rage. The songs are simple and repetitive in structure, the vocals are screeched; nothing too out of the ordinary. But when Filth does it, it works fucking perfectly. You get the Zen-ish “Today’s Lesson”; the stay-punk credo “Lust for Glory”; a story of young love and loss in “Hate”; and the anxiety-ridden wrath of making decisions about destruction from a post-apocalyptic mindset in “Freedom,” all on one hallowed piece of vinyl. Just go get this now! —Vincent (Silver Sprocket, silversprocket.net)

**FRANCIS HAROLD AND THE HOLOGRAMS: Mirror of Fear: 7”**

Bloody-naked-tied-upside-down-hanging-from-a-tree-guy-wearing-a-pig-mask on the cover—check. Must be HoZac Records release. I pretty much like or love everything on this label, purveyors of extreme bands, and Francis fits right in—not super fast, or too noisy, or particularly arty, but a fucked up combination of all those things in very palatable droning way. Francis is from Bisbee, AZ, a strange-ass and cool lost oasis, so no wonder the band sounds like a toothless cousin to TV Ghost or Functional Blackouts. Mysteriously refreshing, like a spray of new car fragrance in your mouth. —Speedway Randy (HoZac)

**FRESH MEAT: Leather Daddy: EP**

The cover of this record, which is a photo of a man covered head to toe in leather, including the mask, looks like something you would find stashed way at the back of some 7” record bin that’s located in the far back corner of some out of the way record shop. At least, this is the sort of stuff I’m always hoping to find. Plus the record is called *Leather Daddy*. Right there alone, you know this is something you want to hear. The music is bent and noisy with twittering feedback all over the songs. The vocals have almost no emotion, or at least they sound detached and far away. The pumping bass lines work the songs into your mind, playing almost endlessly on that mental i-pod of yours, and disturbing

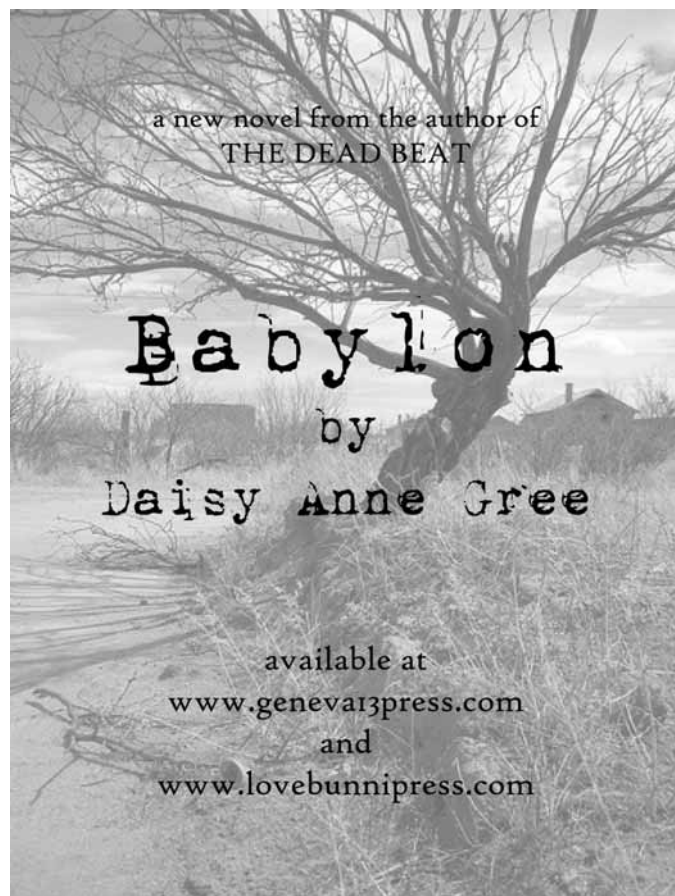
your sleep. Not to mention, the whole thing sounds like it was recorded in a storm cellar with no sound proofing. In short, this is some cool stuff! The crying at the beginning of “Problem Fixer” is the obvious indication one is in for a good record. Sometimes I think to myself that today’s punk rock lacks vision, is all cookie cutter, is playing it safe with their black clothes covered in patches of bands from a millennium ago with dirt bags grunting clichés into a microphone, then I hear bands like this here Fresh Meat that knock me out of my cynical haze. Would be nice if they take this show on the road and head west. West, where the land meets the sea, and all your dreams come true. —M.Avrq (Fashionable Idiots, fashionableidiots.com)

**FUTURE VIRGINS: Easiest Years: 7”**

Good fucking lord. It’s no secret that this band is capable of amazing things, but this 7” is a piece of work. After seeing them last Fest, it was determined they had to be robot aliens to be that good. This is must-have! And the fact that a gigantic majority of the world has absolutely no access to it is a god damn shame. This is music that’s honest, meaningful, and straight enjoyable to listen to. I’m pretty sure a record hasn’t affected me this much since *Stray Dog Town*. —Daryl (Plan-It-X South)

**FUTURE VIRGINS: Easiest Years: 7”**

There are a few large reasons I don’t consider myself a “music journalist,”



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even though I've spent a huge portion of the past fifteen years constantly writing record reviews. There are two poles that such an individual shoots for. 1.) Latching onto a rising star that they're hoping will get a lot of sales: all that next-big-thing, voice-of-a-generation bullshit that VH-1/*Spin*/*AP* has a boner for. 2.) The writer as self-made superstar through outrageous behavior (at least on paper). And not to make too fine a point of it, a majority of those "music reporter superstars" of yore became beholden to major companies, even beloved Lester. I believe in neither of these approaches because the bands that I champion—ninety-nine percent of them—will never sell more than a couple thousand records at a time. So, when I say that this Future Virgins 7" is in the upper atmosphere of the best DIY punk ever recorded, I say it with intentions to aggrandize or fool no one. A long and fully loaded train of experience is backing me up. So, let those who are in a large, crumbling musical houses with big megaphones propagandize what they may. I'll be listening to the Future Virgins instead. Over and over and over again, my friend. And there's no better testament than listening to music that's so good that it feels as important as a basic human need. —Todd (Plan-It-X South)

**GATEWAY DISTRICT, THE: *Some Days You Get the Thunder*: CD**

There's so much right about this album, from its handwritten lyrics laid down on art by the band members, to great imagery in their songs. "My eyes are

too wide for this light. It makes halos around the wine." That's a line from their song "Keeps Track of the Time." But there's too much juxtaposition to the overall flow of the tracks for me. Going from deep, heartfelt songs to straight-up pop tunes was a little too jarring for my ears. There are a lot of meaningful lyrics here, but it's put to music that just doesn't express the emotions of what they are saying. —N.L. Dewart (It's Alive)

**GENUINE IMITATIONS, THE: *Battle Hill*: CD**

Indescribable, banging, loose, and musically inept outsider punkness. Vocals that go from annoying to really annoying. The odds of you or anyone liking these songs is not likely. I'd be hard pressed to find a way to sell it to you. But these upstate New Yorkers probably couldn't care less what you think. They probably don't care what I think either, yet it's pretty fucking clear that they like what they're doing. And, for what it's worth, I love this shit. —Craven Rock (AD, no address)

**GLUE!: Self-titled: EP**

Glue! hail from Olympia, WA. However, their sound has more in common with Revolution Summer DC bands than it does Sleater-Kinney. I can hear the simple yet solid song writing of Gray Matter as well as the more discordant moments of Rites Of Spring. Contemporary comparisons would be the darker sounds coming from their neighbors to the south in Portland such

as The Estranged and a little bit of Harum Scarum's vocals. I hate to admit it, but I don't always read a band's lyrics (assuming they're provided) because—more often than not—I get bored halfway through. Such was not the case this time. They sure know how to paint a picture of frustration, disappointment, and emptiness in such a manner that I found myself actually paying attention for once. Four songs that I recommend listening to while you're simultaneously pissed, bored, and drinking. —Juan Espinosa (Rumbletowne)

**GONZALES: *Checkmate*: CD**

Gonzales are full-tilt, hard-rockin' Spaniards whose blasting tuneage had me enthralled from start to finish. But a burning question remains: are Gonzales a hard rock band with punk rock influence, or is it the other way around? And while I'm at it, why do so many great European bands make me ask this question? This is rock'n'roll done in a way that Americans oftentimes seem to be incapable of pulling off—all the bark and all the bite, but very little of that pretentious "look at me; I'm a cock-rock star" sensibility. Dark and dirty bars, bad smells, and a hurricane of cheap beer would be the appropriate auditory environment for this band, based on what the record holds. I suspect (and hope) Gonzales would agree. Great friggin' record. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Chorus Of One, chorusofonerecords.it)

**GOVERNMENT ISSUE:**

***The Punk Remains the Same*: CDEP**

Five tunes, recorded live in their prime circa 1982-83. Seems a measly amount of tuneage for a CD, but, apparently, it is also on 7", so it makes more sense. If you dig 'em, you'll definitely dig this, but if you don't know who they are, you seriously gotta go back and catch up with this venerable hardcore band's back catalog. I suggest you start with the *Legless Bull* EP, collected on Dischord's *Year in Seven Inches* compilation, or the *Complete History Vol. 1* collection on Dr. Strange and progress forward. Oh, and yes, a version of "Sheer Terror" is on here. —Jimmy Alvarado (DC Jam)

**HARLEQUIN KID: Self-titled: Cassette**

The insert for this release keeps the band's story shrouded in mystery, other than that they like pictures of really old, beat-to-shit cars. But they actually look like fine young men from Appleton, WI online. This five-song EP starts off with the sludge rock of "Deer Slayer." Side one ends with "Don't Help Me Up," which strikes me as dipping into the Killdozer pool, which I have no problem with at all. "Drown the Sun" blurs the crosshairs between Volcano Suns and Bastro. Promising debut slab, guys. Let's see where next year's extended play takes us. —Sean Koepenick (self-released)

**HEATH DEADGER: Self-titled: Cassette**

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vocal performance that contains even a hint of actual melody. Not something to throw on at your next BBQ. But "So Black Jesus Has Descended" has a nice beat and you can dance to it, so what the hell do I know? —Sean Koepenick (Self-released)

#### HERE COMES A BIG BLACK CLOUD!!: "Black Mold" b/w "Psychic Violence": 7"

Chaotic, skittering, in-the-red, energetic and organ-infested: I wouldn't call it a mess because it sounds like they know what they're doing. Also straddles the new and the old, so a mix between the Mummies (the garage elements) and The Peppermints (really worked-up zombies on LSD) wouldn't be too far a field. Comes with 3D glasses, but the seahorse on the cover doesn't pop out at me as much as I hoped it would. —Todd (Stankhouse, myspace.com/stankhouserecords)

#### HEX DISPENSERS, THE: Winchester Mystery House: LP

I was dragged kicking and screaming into the "garage punk" world, being entirely suspicious of the genre's good-timey nature and undeniable image consciousness. Thankfully, I ended up coming across a handful of bands that I truly love, and The Hex Dispensers are right at the top of that short list. I liked their first LP quite a bit, but I was completely blown away by both the *Lose My Cool* and *My Love Is a Bat 7"*s. *Winchester Mystery House*, their second LP, has torn my

head clean off. This is the band's fastest, darkest, and most memorable stuff to date, hands down. The verses are as catchy as the choruses, the music is more melodic yet somehow more evil sounding, and the vocal performance is absolutely killer. As far as I'm concerned, The Hex Dispensers put the rest of their currently über-hip sub-genre to shame. Awesome. —Dave Williams (Alien Snatch)

#### HEX DISPENSERS: Winchester Mystery House: CD

The Hex Dispensers are the magic bullet. What they pull off is so fraught with potential failure, that the fact that they are any better than passable is a cause for celebration. Let's establish some early facts: the Hex Dispensers are great and they've made their best album yet. Let me explain some larger implications. Bands of Danzig ripper-off-ers are clowns. Here's a fun thing to do. For every devil-locked spook who's taking themselves a wee bit too seriously at their respective musical duties, I just imagine them with bright red noses, big-ass shoes, and oversized ties. For every skeleton-handed glove, I imagine bright pink polka dots. If you're asking me to willingly suspend belief that the Misfits never existed and what you're doing has one iota of a creative spark, I might as well have fun with it. But the Hex Dispensers, although they tread in the operatic darker lands of music's psyche, they do it with an Edward Gorey precision and a *Tales from the Crypt* style of

understanding of both blood spatters and the psychology of titillating terror. They're both simultaneously paranoid and dance party of the apocalypse-sounding, filtered through the dark charcoal of years playing in small bars and backyards. The album ends with a kick-ass cover of Devo's "Gates of Steel." If you're on a tight budget, and can only buy a couple of records this year, here's one of my top recommendations.

—Todd (Douchemaster)

#### HICKOIDS: Walt a-Cross-Dress Texas: CD

The Hickoids were one of those bands like the Dead Milkmen who straddled the fence between novelty band and punk band. It was clear from the tunes that they didn't take themselves too seriously and yet, obviously, put some thought into what they were doing. The music on this reissue does nothing to sway that assessment, with tunes that poke fun at whatever's nearest to them at the time with enough cowboy punker twang to satisfy any Lamasportin' Mohican looking to dive off the stage. "Queen of the BBQ" still brings a smile to my face. —Jimmy Alvarado (Saustex)

#### HJERTESTOP: Aarh Fuck....: EP

Okay, this is the domestic pressing of their EP that originally came out in 2005 on Kick N Punch, then Adult Crash. There's a Young Wasteners and Incontrollados connection here, and this band is of the same style: old

style punk from Denmark. If you like stuff like City-X, and the Razorblades, or even a semi recent band like No Hope For The Kids, then you need to get this. Hjertestop pull off the retro sound with ease. The songs are tuneful, catchy, and well structured and played. I think my favorite of this record is "Vi Er Overall" with its hyper tempo and classic guitar sound. Then there's the song that kicks off the flip, "Ind I Lejren" that's pretty ripping as well. Hell, this whole record rips. They switch up the tempos, create some tension, and pace this thing properly throughout. More than a mere collection of songs, this is a solid EP. I heard these guys played the L.A. area not too long ago. Come back so I can see you guys. I'll take you to Punky Reggae Party when the show is done! Hjertestop translates to "heart failure." Whoa! —M.Avrq (Fashionable Idiots, fashionableidiots.com)

#### HOLDING ON TO SOUND: Songs of Freedom: CD

At first, these guys struck me as being fairly Propagandi-influenced, since this came off as kind of prog-y and political, but there's touches of bands like Bridge And Tunnel, or The Exit. It's pretty cool, though it runs kind of long at times, with songs coming in at over five minutes (which is cool if you're like, Coltrane, but I get restless when it comes to punk). But, there is a song called "Kurt Russell," which is pretty rad. —Joe Evans III (Geykido Comet)

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**HÖLLEY 750: Death Machine: CDEP**

The band's name comes from a famed carburetor and they self-describe themselves as "trucker punk." This six-song EP reminds me of a slower Limecell or Cocknoose, and it's hard not to raise a hairy fist in the air as the songs plod on. Jamie Desoto's growly vocals are notably expressive and there's a dedicated "we mean it" vibe to it all that rises to the surface on every track. The song title "Guns and/or Knives" might be tongue-in-cheek, but the seedy lyrics are seriously awesome. —Art Ettinger (Zodiac Killer)

**HOMOSTUPIDS: Self-titled: LP**

This emerges somewhere between the Spits and the Tyrades, and those familiar with what's lurking beneath those rocks—the dark digestion, the cool heat, the wiggling obscured from far above—may say, "That sounds incompatible." The Spits and the Tyrades both employ the tactic of "Music as fight," and the Homostupids take angular, bent wires of songs, like a hand-unwound coat hanger, and then they mercilessly beat the listener about the neck, shoulders, face, and delicates. It's a type of garage rock that comes with its own set of weapons and this record's an unrelenting, solid mass. Bathe it in blood and score it as another target hit by the 'Stupids. —Todd (My Mind's Eye)

**HUMANS, THE: Pop! 7" EP**

The Humans aren't reinventing the 12-bar blues here, but they're using it

to burst out some fierce garage rock. This is fun times with four songs. You gotta love the humorous sleeve art for this 7", which has a comic of a woman popping her zit. Good times. —N.L. Dewart (The Humans)

**IDLE HANDS: Postponed: LP**

This record fucking *rips*. Ultra-melodic punk rock, like a sped-up Statues but with unmistakably European melodies, almost like slowed-down '90s Burning Heart skate punk at times. I don't know if it's a welcome comparison or not, but I even get a total Satanic Surfers vibe from some of these tracks and I am stoked. Don't take that too literally, though—Idle Hands are straight-up '70s style sing-along punk from the Jam/Buzzcocks school, but there are elements at work here that avoid having the band too easily pigeonholed. Regardless, if you're a fan of that post-power-pop, early Jam-influenced sound, I'm pretty damn confident this record'll floor you. Pick up their debut EP while you're at it; it's a total slayer. —Dave Williams (Hardware)

**IN THE HOLLOWES: Self-titled: 7"**

Solid Baltimore post-Fugazi hardcore, driving melodies with anger, melodic but snarly voice, lots of moody energy. Poetic lyrics that have issues with society. "Move Away" is kickass, nice and powerful. The other two songs are good but not as excitable to me, but this is obviously a band that can do cool things. —Speedway Randy (Mightier Than Sword, mtsrecords.com)

**JAIL: There's No Sky (Oh My My): LP**

These jingle jangly indie rock tunes had me bobbing my head as soon as the needle hit the vinyl. It's got nice a nice mix of organ and splashy drum cymbals to keep the tracks moving right along. This album has all that right touches of old school garage rock without sounding washed up by being too derivative. Damn fine LP here. —N.L. Dewart (Jail, myspace.com/jailjailjailjail)

**JEFFREY NOVAK: One of a Kind: 7"**

Similar to his Memphis neighbor Jay Reatard, Novak has a furious and steady output of records, also moving from a more harsh noise to cleaner poppy work. I didn't want to describe it as "growing" because Novak's early fuzz sound as a one-man destruction crew is still great and accomplished. He is just doing a different type of music now. I never get hung up on someone not sounding exactly the same for fifty albums, provided what they are doing is good. As the OMB, Novak tore it up with the precision timing of vicious, noisy garage punk on a full-length and tons of 7"s in a short time, moving on to the three-piece Rat Traps, which slowed down to punk before hitting breakneck speed on their third 7". Next came Cheap Time, which seems to be a band concurrent to his solo releases, both embracing a sort of post-Bowie and T. Rex sound—I'm sure I'm missing much better, more obscure references/influences. While Cheap Time is more poppy, the solo

work on his recent full-length and this 7" is more slow and dreamy, some piano mixed in, with the pedals on but not distorted. It's catchy, it's sweet and melodic, and probably more popular in Brooklyn and Silverlake than the early, brutal stuff. All in all, Novak is someone to always listen to. —Speedway Randy (Sweet Rot)

**JFA: To All Our Friends: CD**

I remember seeing this band at Fenders in Long Beach circa 1986. Their drummer Bam Bam was zonked on acid that night, which resulted in a super-loooooong, tripped out version of "The Day Walt Disney Died," but he more than held up his own during warp factor nine versions of all their hits. A badass show that fits easily into one of the top two best shows I ever saw 'em do (the other being a show they did with Bad Religion and L7 at a Mexican restaurant in Hollywood a couple of years later, where every band was at their peak and the place was on the verge of total mayhem for most of the night, a vibe that finally ended with someone stabbing someone else on the dance floor right in front of Yogi and me while we were tripping on acid. There was also the show they did with Die Kreuzen and Mighty Sphincter, but this little fan-geek is digressing). My clutch of friends fuggin' worshipped this band not because we were skate rats (although a few were), but because they were masters of a unique brand of hardcore that was fast, furious, and chock full of disparate influences ranging from

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psychedelia to surf to funk. There was no way you could confuse JFA with any other band, a trait that is always a marker that the band you're listening to is goddamned good at what they do. This live disc demonstrates that they remain masters of their domain. The tempos are slower than their '80s peak, but unlike other bands, what this translates into is that they play at around the speed of the original studio versions of the songs here, which, in turn, were pretty thrashin' in their own right. The tracks here are culled from the *crème de la crème* of the band's catalog—"Preppy," "Beach Blanket Bongout," "We Know You Suck," "Charlie Brown"—as well as a couple from their last studio effort. Sound is faboo, delivery is properly spirited and Brian is in fine, um, howl. Gripes? Inclusion of the aforementioned "Walt Disney" and at least one of their legendary surf covers would've been nice, and though it has fourteen tracks, the disc is too goddamned short, which says a lot. Other than that, this is about as good as live hardcore albums, and bands, get. —Jimmy Alvarado (DC-Jam)

#### JONESES: *Criminal History: 2 x LP*

What we have here is a reissue of the Joneses collection that originally came out on Sympathy For The Record Industry at the beginning of the decade. That collection went out of print rather quickly and became quite sought after. This is an excellent overview of this amazing band and this new version is available on vinyl for the first time.

In addition, there are bonus demo tracks here that are quite awesome, unlike the usual throwaway bonus tracks. The Joneses are one of the greatest bands of all time and this is a fantastic introduction to the band for anyone who has yet to hear them. —Mike Frame (Full Breach, fullbreach77.com)

#### JONESIN' / DUDE JAMS: *Split 7"*

Jonesin': It's fun to think that if Sasquatch was a hobo who was in a punk band and then he lit himself on fire accidentally from falling asleep in bed while smoking. Oh yeah, and he was in a pissy mood and had a powerful backup band. One song about choking on bad geography, and on the slower second song, the fire turns to smoky-voiced anthems of breaking down. Dude Jams: Is a studio band of an ex-Grumpies dude, who'll play out occasionally with a full band. The "music critic" in me struggles against the feeling of "This is too easy. I already know these songs," but the dude in me really likes a song like "Shit Fit," where it's totally and simultaneously like and unlike The Knack: duct tape as wallpaper, self-loathing in dirty pop sensibility, and undeniable bounce and sing-along-ability. Fun. As an added bonus, played this as per the label's instructions at thirty-three and it's not-so-bad doom, so you get two records in one. —Todd (Muy Autentico / Dirt Cult)

#### JUICEBOXXX: *Thunder Jam #5 and #6: 7"*

Electric drums, electric cymbal, electric piano, dare I say it in a punk zine but it's

pretty fun. Sounds like a party inside a bedroom. —Speedway Randy (Vicious Pop, viciouspoprecords.com)

#### JUNK, THE: *Demo: CD*

Word on the street is that the institution known as the Smut Peddlers has called it quits after a fifteen-year stab at things. But one not to rest on her laurels, Julia the gate-crashing drummer, is already involved in another band. The tattooing from her long tour in the Peddlers is immediately recognizable. Take the first British wave of punk, ghost ride it into the endless suburbs of Orange County and knock over a phone pole. Let that shit fester under the facade of sunshine and home owners associations, inject it with bad drugs in an attempt to make the cul-de-sacs disappear, and that's the starting point. The Junk make some important departures from their predecessor, though, namely eyeballing Ohio and Michigan: Dead Boys, Pagans, Iggy And The Stooges. And you know what? It's menace, pure, simple, shorn, and played with the slightest of smiles. Very effective and a great first batch of songs. —Todd (Self-released, thejunksite.com)

#### KIDS EXPLODE / SOLEMN LEAGUE: *Kids Come Across, Solemn and Lost: Split 7"*

Kids Explode: reminds me of the post-punk stuff coming out in the mid- to late-'80s, but I'm not quite sure why. Kids Explode vaguely reminds me of bands like Brave New World and mid- to late-'80s Dischord acts like

Egghunt. The sound is a bit of the dance machine along with a fetally conjoined twin of muted yet desperate rock'n'roll. There's a real new wavish feel on the second song. Even a hint of math rock. All in all, good stuff—it's a mix of a number of different sounds but the songs do not sound forced, so everything works well together. Solemn League: very much in the same vein, only a bit more traditionally rocking. If not for a different vocalist, I wouldn't have known that this was a different band. Solemn League has a bigger, more melodic sound bordering on an emo sound, but I dare not splash them with such labels. The groups chosen for this record work so well together that they can be mistaken for the same act. Yet there is something distinctive about each. Can this record be described as emo math rock with a club mix sensibility? Or is it an angry reflexive property put to music? —The Lord Kveldulfr (Asymmetrie, asymmetrie@gmx.net)

#### KILL CONRAD: *"Work & Class" b/w "D.B.D.S": 7"*

Hailing from Boston, it makes sense that Kill Conrad are reminiscent of later '80s East Coast punk, a little hardcore crust with the melody; it's got the beat, got the tight energy that keeps you listening. Just recreating that sound without the *trying too hard* feeling is admirable. Two titles, two 7"s in one? Five cool songs. Plus, not enough bands write punk rock anthems about Peter North and David

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Schwimmer anymore. Put this on your mix tape and skate to the bowl. —Speedway Randy (Neutral Territory, neutralterritoryrecords.com)

**KILLING CALIFORNIA: Bones & Sand: CD EP**

Hard and heavy thrash punk from these San Clemente rockers: tight guitar riffs smashed with a frying pan into vocals that will make your eardrums beg for forgiveness. “Blue Heron Bridge” caught my ear on this six-song platter. These guys look to be touring a lot, so go check them out for some fast and furious hardcore. —Sean Koeppenick (Basement)

**K-JELL: Refreshing K-Jell Power: CD**  
Norway’s K-Jell on the “East meets West” Norwegian/Chinese label October Party are a mind numbingly catchy, poppy punk band that is one of the best kept secrets of our time. It’s downright alarming that an instant classic like *Refreshing K-Jell Power* can be relatively unknown, at least stateside. K-Jell is sort of what D4 would sound like if they had some streetpunk influences. Brilliant. Just plain fucking brilliant. —Art Ettinger (October Party)

**MAC BLACKOUT: The Rabid Babies: CD**  
The press sheet mentions Big Black and Devo as major reference points for Mac Blackout. Seeing as those are two of my all-time favorite bands, I felt almost obligated to listen to this. After giving this a couple spins, I don’t really

agree with the comparisons. This is way garageier than either of those two bands. There are a lot of keyboards and weird electronic sounds, like Devo, and some extreme, in-the-red guitar tones and drum machines, like Big Black, but it’s not quite the same type of thing. What this strikes me as is more like a one man version of the early L.A. art punk stuff like Geza X And The Mommymen, Black Randy And The Metrosquad, or The Eyes. This is fine for what it is, but not what I was expecting. This feels like music that shoots for innovative but instead lands at well-worn eclecticism. —Adrian (Dead Beat)

**MAMMOTH GRINDER: No Results: 7” EP**

This is some hardcore, crusty-styled punk that I thought was pretty nice. The vocals reminded me of Born/Dead a little—shouting, but not in a doom/death metal way. Like Born/Dead, there are three members in the band, although they apparently hail from Austin, Texas. The drums rarely verged into that boring, fast hardcore style (and seemed actually quite good), and there were some nice break downs and heavy rhythms. Reasonably furious, probably fun live. Lyrics seem political in style but they’re a little vague—this is not a bad thing, just means they’re not as easy to figure out as they might otherwise be. Pretty aggro, though. Nice photo of the band playing a show on the insert. The vinyl itself is wine—red colored split with gray—white. Good

stuff. —Jennifer Federico (Inkblot, c/o Sam Sputo / Faith Laurel)

**MANIKIN: Stop the Sirens: LP**

Taking cues from PIL, Joy Division, and Bauhaus: distorted vocals, wailing trumpet at times, marching bass lines, garroting guitars, all played on with the tension of a large mass sliding on black ice, Manikin continue along the trajectory of their earlier 7”s. Like an obscure map of a yet-fully-discovered land, it takes a while to notice the details lurking beneath the more obvious mountain tops. I’m sure this record will reveal more from the shadows on additional spins and I’m willing to give it that chance. Fans of The Estranged and The Lost Sounds, take note. You’re preconditioned to give Manikin a fair shake. Extremely well realized. —Todd (Super Secret)

**MEATMEN, THE: Cover the Earth: CD**

First new recording from Tesco Vee in quite some time. Here the man offers up his favorite covers. With twenty-four tracks, there is something here for everyone. You get punk chestnuts from Fear, GG Allin, Roky Erickson, and Black Market Baby. Metal gets the nod with Motörhead, Saxon, and some B.O.C. There’s even some Motown love junk on here. I could have done without two Black Randy tunes, but, hey, that’s nit-pickin’. Tesco’s back in action, just don’t leave the cover lying around the next time you have the P.T.A. over for tea and biscuits! —Sean Koeppenick (Meat King)

**MIDDLE AMERICA: Scars: 7”**

The title track, “Scars,” sounds a hell of a lot like Black Flag’s “Damaged,” with similar bass line, tempo, and distorted and twisted guitar sound. Some may think this is a good thing. But Middle America is no Black Flag. The playing is less intense, and despite all the screaming and growling, the urgency and desperation sounds a tad forced. The opener, “Every Night” starts off okay, then tends to lose its way and washes out with some feedback. “Reclusion” starts off with a dark and minimal tone similar to what the Birthday Party could achieve—plodding—then lurches into thrashy hardcore punk and is suddenly over. Of the three cuts on this record, this is the standout track. —M.Avrq (Fashionable Idiots, fashionableidiots.com)

**MINOR AUTHORITY: Punk Side Up: CD**

If you’re able to get past the ridiculous band name, album title, song titles, haircuts, and everything that *isn’t* the music, you might be able to stomach this. The band sounds like early ‘80s hardcore (Bad Religion, Adolescents, etc.) and does a superb job. It just looks so lampoonish that it’s amazing it isn’t. It’s very hard to take it seriously, but damn if they don’t know how to write a song. —Bryan Static (Pop Sweatshop)

**MISS DERRINGER: Winter Hill: CD**

Always a kinda dicey affair for me whenever I hafta review a disc from a band that includes people I know,

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in this case Liz McGrath, whose old band Tongue I shared many a rehearsal space and bill with when I was in the Black Jax. Luckily, her latest musical endeavor, while nowhere near the oddball hardcore scree that Tongue reveled in, is a nice mix of rootsy rock, '60s garage rock, and Spector-tinged teen tragedy girl group fodder. It's a little hard getting my head around an El Sereno girl affecting an occasional country twang, but she has a nice, rich voice that fits well with the music the rest of the guys in the band are laying down, and vice versa. Gotta admit, I kept half-expecting her to wind up and let fly some prime throat-shredding vocals while the band pummeled their instruments in wild abandon, but while that never happens here, what they did deliver was pretty danged good. —Jimmy Alvarado (Nickel and Dime/Triple X)

**MODERN CAESARS, THE: *Botox Rats*: LP**  
Ugh...the Modern Caesars play Johnny Thunders-style tunes with less pizzazz than The Joneses. And that sucks. —Ryan Leach (Meaty Beaty)

**MUNDO MUERTO: *Rompe el Silencio*: 7"**  
An exciting new band from the Southern California area—which I have had the pleasure of seeing a few times this year—that has really caught my eye and ears. Featuring a collection of members from Mala Sangre, The Homewreckers, and Svarta Tankar, this band has an early '80s sound that takes pieces from South America and Mexico and make

it sound relevant today. Songs sung in Spanish are backed by a sonic push of lightly distorted guitar sounds that give the music a raw edge but hook you with their strong melody. It makes you want to just dance in the pit or pogo in your room. First time I heard the music, I got energized with excitement that I'm really going to have fun listening to this instead of the usual appreciation of music through anger. I can't wait to see what more is in store from this foursome. —Donofthedeat (Mundo Muerto, myspace.com/mundoxmuerto)

**NICE FACE: *Mnemonic Device*: 7"**  
Nice Face has a sound that is a bit arty and slightly experimental. The a-side, "Mnemonic Device," is hypnotic, echoey, and a bit creepy-sounding—a good tune for late autumn in northern climes. The b-side, "Situation Is Facing Utter Annihilation," is more straight-up rocking with a very fuzzy sound that made me wonder if this outfit were from Detroit (initial research has revealed nothing in that regard) because they remind me of a version of the Go on amphetamines. Vocals sound like their done through a hummacomb. With my arcane Rocky and Bullwinkle reference complete, so is what appears to be a rather inadequate review. End of transmission. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Sacred Bones)

**NIGHT BIRDS: *Demo*: CDR**  
The latest in the recent wave of "well, our old bands broke up, time to start fresh" bands from the New

Jersey area. Four songs of '80s West Coast/California-influenced hardcore punk, that sounds a lot like the Dead Kennedys (especially with the surfy guitars/solid musicianship all around), and touches of bands like the Adolescents, D.I. and TSOL. Pretty awesome, considering, I think, they've been around for about two days. —Joe Evans III (Self-released, myspace.com/nghtbrds)

**OFF WITH THEIR HEADS: *Live at the Atlantic: Vol 2*: 7"**  
This pristine live two-song recording of Off With Their Heads flew off the needle and rocked my studio apartment so fucking hard I felt like was at their show. The "I Am You" side alone makes this 7" worth getting, but the vomit confession on the "Go On Git Now" side really proves why you should go on and get this now. —N.L. Dewart (Sound Study)

**OUTRAGE: *Broken*: CD**  
As I've mentioned in past reviews, I'm a sucker for '90s-style "new school" hardcore. Luckily for me, the cyclical nature of genre resurgences currently finds the rather stale faux-Madball thing being replaced by a slew of bands channeling the early-Ferret/Victory/Trustkill catalogs. Outrage brings to mind a lot of *When Forever Comes Crashing*-era Converge and Cave In's brief *Until Your Heart Stops* period, along with a hearty dose of Harvest or early Botch-esque writing. A totally accurate and fitting throwback that still

manages to sound current. Good work fellas. —Dave Williams (Panic)


**PAINT IT BLACK: *Amnesia*: 7" EP**  
While I have the first three Paint It Black full lengths, this is the first time I've seen them branch out into EP territory. This is a format that suits their style of hardcore very well, actually. Paint It Black plays modern day youth crew-influenced hardcore with a bit more melodic edge that shows the pedigree of singer Dan Yemin's years playing guitar in Kid Dynamite. While none of the three previous efforts could be mistaken as mellow, it seems that Yemin's vocals manage to be even more unrestrained and throat shredding than before. This is really apparent on the opening track, "Salem," which is a very pointed condemnation of the religious right's influence on society. This may be the heaviest and angriest track I've heard the band lay down yet. The song begins with a heavy, plodding near drone which leads to a fast midsection before returning to some slow heaviness and ending with Yemin, unaccompanied, yelling of what sounds like the death sentence of the right-wing establishment. I'll be honest and state that this style of hardcore can get a little tedious at length, and there are times where I've caught myself losing focus when listening to the band's earlier full lengths from end to end. The brevity of an EP really helps to focus Paint It Black's attack to a few powerful,

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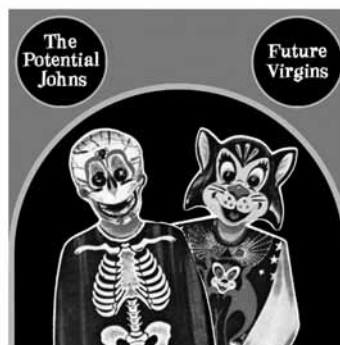
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short but sweet, bursts. —Adrian (Bridge Nine)

#### PILLOWFIGHTS, THE: *Round 1: CD*

I declare this album to be pop punk perfection. It's ten tracks and most of the songs are about a minute (the longest is a minute and twenty-three seconds and the shortest is a robust thirty-three seconds). This band definitely subscribes to the Minutemen's "jam econo" philosophy. This isn't blast beat-driven powerviolence either, but fully fleshed out and great pop punk that just doesn't see the need for stuff like bridges or repeating a chorus if it can get the job done the first time. With the male/female vocals, this is like a distilled concentration of the best moments of bands like Lemuria and Tsunami Bomb. The song "True Story" has one of my favorite lyrics as of late: "And on the first night, we hung out in the park/ it was like reading Huxley for the first time." Something about the sentiment of that line really sticks with me. Not a second in the roughly ten minute runtime of this album is wasted, as every song has a memorable lyric, or riff, or little melodic moment. —Adrian (Silver Sprocket, avi@springmanrecords.com)

#### PRETTY VANILLA: *7 Inches Deep: 7"*

I watched a video at Pretty Vanilla's MySpace page, and while it was a shitty recording they sounded kind of loud and a little rough around the

edges. And I could dig that even if I wasn't totally down with their glam meets early hair metal look. But the music on the seven inch is so polished it's boring. Some of the songs sound like they should have been featured on *Happy Days*. The vocals are high pitched and kind of reminded me of Superchunk in that sense that you might go a long time thinking that the vocalist is a woman only to find out sometime later that it's actually a dude. Their song "Paper Tiger" had a nice, muddy-sounding guitar solo that started to show what I heard on the video. But that little part was the only sign of hope I heard on this otherwise poor 1960s throwback. My suggestion: look into recording more lo-fi or analog, get a little dirtier, fuzzier sound on the guitar and lose the cheesy backup vocals. If I want to listen to stuff like you're playing, I'll go rent a copy of *Back to the Future*. —Kurt Morris (prettyvanilla.com)

#### PREYING HANDS: *Through the Dark: CD*

This Montreal band sounds like Annie from This Is My Fist singing for Strike Anywhere. Those two flavors go together like chicken and waffles. Annie, if you're reading this, I just called you a waffle. You're a waffle! Preying Hands' singer is a woman with a scratchy voice who manages to make lyrics like "They breed their hate/The bloodthirsty citizenry, hiding behind birthright" come out catchy. The music is gritty, fast, and catchy; a mix of '90s skate punk and posi-core

with metal leads. My one gripe is that they never tinker with the formula, and the songs blend together a few tracks in, but I've still played this CD three times today. More waffles, please! —CT Terry (Inimical)

#### PRUNALOGSUSAN PENTAGRAM: *17 New Cutecore Blasts from: 7"*

When you get something like this, you know there's really no middle ground on it. Regardless, this is some late '90s noise stuff you'd find on Alternative Tentacles, like a *weirder* Pachinko. Goddamn. —Joe Evans III (Trigger On The Dutendoo, myspace.com/triggeronthedutendoo)

#### R. STEVIE MOORE: *U.R. True + 3: 7" EP*

Four songs of home-recorded new wave, laden with treble and flange. The vocals are weird, running the gamut from sweet falsettos to Motörhead growls. A couple of the songs are very catchy, but a couple are a little too herky-jerky. I was listening, being reminded of the more far-out Jay Reatard stuff, then I looked this guy up and found out that he's a middle aged dude whose father played with Elvis Presley, and he's been making home tapes since the mid 1960s. Wow. I'd say this is good material by an artist who probably falls into the music geek trap where people know his back story better than his actual output. In other words, if you check this out, you'll hear some interesting music and manage to impress obnoxious people. —CT Terry (Felony Fidelity)

#### RATIONAL ANTHEM / STRAIGHT A'S, THE: *Use Your Delusion I: Split: 7"*

Sorry but this split got my attention for its Guns N' Roses spoof cover art. The mock front has Shakespearean-looking clip art and reads Use Your Delusion I in the yellow and red that GNR used. Rational Anthem's side has some in-your-face, fast-hitting pop punk with snotty vocals. The strait A's brand of pop punk carries more influences of 1950's rock. This hum along split has enough bounce to keep you snapping your fingers, even after these short numbers have passed by your ears. —N.L. Dewart (Traffic Street)

#### RATS, THE: *Intermittent Signals: LP*

The Rats were a punk band from Portland, Oregon formed in the early eighties from the ashes of a garage band called The Lollipop Shoppe. Mississippi records continues to reissue the band's long out of print catalog with the release of *Intermittent Signals*, the band's second album. Mid tempo, angst-ridden punk delivered matter-of-factly with undistorted guitars that combine ratchety riffs and driving bass lines. There are two songs criticizing the radio. Damn radio. —Billups Allen (Mississippi)

#### RAZORBLADE: *Dutch Steel: The Best of Razorblade 2001-2009: CD*

I'm floored by Holland's Razorblade, a powerful, in-your-face oi band in the great tradition of both early U.K. oi and mid-1980s U.S. oi. This is

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hard oi, so hard that it's typically a challenge to find non-bonehead bands that play in this style. You can put your lame Midtown Bootboys and Landser records aside because now there's a vibrant, non-sketchy group that embraces some of those shady bands' undeniably gripping musical styles. To add some levity into the mix, there's a hilarious, Dutch-language cover of "Smash the Discos." I can't stop shouting "Sloop de discos! Brek ze af!" —Art Ettinger (84 Records/Step-1, [svr84.ghostpros.com/~plrds84/tjfrontpage.htm](mailto:svr84.ghostpros.com/~plrds84/tjfrontpage.htm))

#### REGIME NOIR: *Native Stranger*: CD

One of the nice things about being an older East L.A. punk kid is coming across a band from a later generation that ain't afraid to expand on what they learned in the backyards by mixing in a lot of disparate sounds and styles. What Regime Noir has done here is to eschew the hardcore template in all but the verve they put into executing the songs, lean heavily on post punk's loping, reggae-influenced bass lines and slashing guitars, throw in a nod or two to L.A.'s silly monikered "Chicano Groove" scene of the mid/late-'90s, and add enough of their own personality so that the resulting tunes don't sound like they rolled off the assembly line at a cookie factory. While it could be argued that the song structures could be reined in a bit more on occasion to achieve maximum impact, they've nonetheless managed to set a pretty solid standard

for themselves. A great release here, one that retains its punk roots without pandering to its trappings, and that's already earning them much respect on both sides of L.A.'s bridges. Me, I can't wait to hear their next release, which I'm betting is gonna blow this one out of the water. —Jimmy Alvarado ([myspace.com/regimenoir](http://myspace.com/regimenoir))

#### REIGNING SOUND: *Love and Curses*: CD

Here's to the rest of world having enough sense to realize that Greg Cartwright is a national musical treasure. Listening to the Reigning Sound (or Compulsive Gamblers or Oblivians, all with Greg), I feel this largeness: of scope, of humanity, of understanding of music being of infinite possibilities, but best when tastefully selected and exposed. It's best when beaten upon rocks of experience; best when offered with humility and grace. Blood spilled. Wounds healed but not cosmetically hidden or forgotten. At the core of *Love and Curses* is the songwriting. Both stripped down to acoustic skin and bones and fully dressed with the band ruffling and weaving expansive musical tapestries, this collection of songs tells an instantly relatable, poetically told arc of stories delivered without a Rolodex tongue of clichés. In some way, because it was before my time and adolescent punk rock views prohibited such behavior, for the first time in my life, I can understand how people on a large scale went apeshit for The Rolling Stones and The Beatles.

That part of you wants to live inside the songs, to be able to feel that sort of love and loss, that joy and sorrow, that immediacy that's dripping from every note. In the context of the band's output, this album is an expansion of both *Home for Orphans* and *Too Much Guitar* simultaneously. Don't expect full-on cigarette-huffing sprints all the way through, or for the band to be sitting down into quiet grooves the entire set. But expect fireworks, both filling the sky and inside your head, from start to finish, and you'll be humming: "This debris is all that's left of me," too. One of the best records of 2009, flat-out. —Todd (In The Red)

#### RESURRECTURIS: *Non Voglio Morire*: CD + DVD

Heavy metal of various speeds and hues. The DVD features a video of them playing a song in what looks to be an abandoned building, a "making of" bit and a photo gallery. —Jimmy Alvarado ([coprorecords.co.uk](http://coprorecords.co.uk))

#### RETAINERS: *Waste of Time*: 7"

A friend of mine was raving to me about this band a couple months back. "The only band worth a shit these days is The Retainers. Get their singles. It'll knock your dick in the dirt," he tells me. Herrmmmm... Okay, I gotta check these guys out. Let's be honest, there's not a whole hell of a lot in punk rock these days that is exactly capable of "knocking your dick in the dirt." Two quick blasts of lo-fi and totally blown-out KBD-influenced punk rock from

this prolific outfit. The songs are loud, abrasive, and a bit loose and jangly. The Retainers do what any worthwhile punk does: they come on loud and fast and cut it short before you even have time to collect your thoughts, although that tempo change on the B-side, "Die Baby Die," allows for some introspection, but still... The A-side, "Waste of Time," is from their LP on P. Trash. I guess I need to go shower and get the dirt off my dick. It would be quite strange if I was just standing over the sink doing this and my wife walked in. "It's not what it looks like, honey!" —M.Avrq (Fashionable Idiots, [fashionableidiots.com](http://fashionableidiots.com))

#### REVENGE OF THE PSYCHOTRONIC MAN: *Making Pigs Smoke*: CD

This is fucking great. Gravelly sounding British dudes singing fast and slurred over even faster and gravellier-sounding music (except for the one instrumental ska interlude with one of the best titles ever, "I Know a Cracking Owl Sanctuary"). Okay, the description sounds like every D-beat band, but this is decidedly heavier on the melody department. Think of this as what would happen if Snuff wrote its own version of the Circle Jerk's *Group Sex* album. The mix on this is massive. Drums sound huge, the bass is like a distorted refugee from a psychobilly band, and the guitar has that controlled static tone that Bob Mould perfected in the early Hüsker Dü days. The vocals are catchy as hell. Even though they're so fast, accented,

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and slurry, I have no clue what's being said ninety percent of the time. The fact they do melodic group vocals like this too is quite impressive. While a lyric booklet would help, I fully accept the band's excuse in the liner notes stating that the space was better used for photos of them "acting like dick heads on tour." Great stuff. Along with the Pillowfights album, this is the best stuff I've gotten all year. And I have to say this band takes the prize for the most vaguely disturbing cover art, longest band name, and oddest album title I've seen in a long while. —Adrian (TNS, tnsrecords@hotmail.com)

**RINGERS, THE:**  
**Hurry Up and Wait: 12" EP**

At 6:03 PM, averaging sixty miles per hour, the Bent Outta Shape train leaves Brooklyn, heading west. At 9:18 AM, averaging seventy-seven miles per hour, the Swingin' Utters missed their train going East. Been drinking. Paul Weller is the engineer somewhere in the Midwest. The math's deceptive, though. When the trains collide somewhere in South Dakota, it's no accident. Instead of being a mangle of two not-recognized-as-compatible approaches to music, there's a beautiful and twisted fusion that help make The Ringers unique. Listened to with half an ear, they could be construed as street punk, but that's a disservice. The songs are more about troubled hearts and misinterpreted good intentions instead of dress codes and skewed views of patriotism that end in someone getting physically hurt.

The Bent Outta Shape-isms, in turn, are roughed up, lovingly bruised, and broken-glassed. The Ringers continue getting better with each release, I believe, because they're sounding more and more like themselves and not a calculated collision in a barren land. —Todd (1234 Go!)

**RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS:**  
**Underneath the Owl: CD**

I have to admit a shameful thing. The first track on the new Riverboat Gamblers album has guest vocals by Todd Congelliere and I had to look online to see who that was. (He runs Recess Records and sings for Toys That Kill, a favorite band of *Razorcake*.) So *Razorcake*, I understand if you want to get rid of me. But first I should probably finish this review. The song that Congelliere sings on "Disssisskisskisskiss" is a quick burst to start the album. There are some good harmonies and it's over too quick. The next track, "A Choppy Yet Sincere Apology" really impressed me with the lyrics being a straightforward description of what it's like to have an anxiety disorder and the struggle it entails. As the album goes on through the eleven tracks, the lyrics belie the simplistic music that Riverboat Gamblers play. A number of the songs deal with the lyricist's battles with anxiety, depression and the like, which is really impressive considering that most bands that play this kind of generic poppy punk (heavy emphasis on the pop) typically have

shallow lyrics about girls or partying. There's still a little bit of that on here but, generally, the lyrics are honest descriptions of deeper mental issues going on in the life and mind of the songwriter. There's definitely good stuff there; now if only their sound wasn't so generic and lifeless. I've heard this way too much to be interested in it or even feign appreciation for that sound. —Kurt Morris (Volcom)

**ROGUE NATIONS, THE:**  
**Be Your Own Rogue Nation: CD**

I really wanna like this, and I guess I do on some level, because I can hear they're really trying to think outside of the usual punk/hardcore box like *Secret Hate*, the *Minutemen*, *Angst*, *Rebel Truth*, and other such bands that I've admired over the years. The songs are delivered with a good amount of tension, the guitarist sounds like his hands are just flying all over the neck, and they seem to be putting much effort into what they were doing. Trouble is, something I can't quite place seems to be missing from the equation. Maybe the production is a little flat and tempers the proceeding a bit, or the songs are occasionally busier than they should be, or one of the cylinders is sneakily misfiring. Either way, this fell more on the side of raised eyebrows than exclamations of "Great googly-moogly!" That bums me out a bit, but I'm willing to bet they go over much better live. —Jimmy Alvarado (suicidewatchrecords.com)

**ROUGH STUFF:**  
**Out of Control/Anti Politician: 7"**

Average three-chord street punk/oi from Tokyo. The music is just a hair too slow and too remedial for my tastes. —Donofthead (Longshot)

**RUMSPRINGER / DUDE JAMS:**  
**Split: 7"**

First, put on your Crimpshrine glasses for the length of this review. Dude Jams: Song 1: Whoah, dude, you've got a lot of Todd Congelliere in your monitor. Turn that Toys That Kill knob down a coupla notches (it's the one between the FYP and URTC knobs). Song 2: Whoah, dude, turn down the FYP one a bit, too. I understand channeling your influences, but these two cuts seem like a direct rebroadcast of an already-heard episode... of another band. Rumspringer: Ten years ago, I asked Davey Tiltwheel what he thought about Discount. He smiled, shook his head, and said, "They don't breathe." And although Davey didn't ruin my admiration of Discount, I couldn't listen to them the same. Rumspringer's a band that breathes. The songs have a lot of open flexibility, are musically expansive, and, through stretches of time, you pleasantly realize there aren't vocals. As an aside, when the vocalist speeds up, he sounds like the lead singer of the Bouncing Souls. —Todd (Muy Autentico)

**RUMSPRINGER / SLEEP LIKE A LOG:**  
**Split: 7"**

This four-song split has the influences of that pop punk/emo style music that was

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popular in the early 2000s. Regardless, I still found myself enjoying this 7". I've seen Rumspringer live, and it's really difficult for me to reconcile their recorded sound with their performance sound. But this split has me scratching my head even more because the track "Normal Again" sounds most like the raw, rough-around-the-edges, high energy punk they brought to their show, yet it's the one song written by the member who quit the band. Sleep Like A Log brings more technical guitar chops to its emo-influenced pop, but the Japanese accents make the tear-jerking songs bearable because it allowed me to focus on the melody and the music rather than on lyrics like, "I don't believe. In the sadness, real and fiction are same by my eyes." Still, all the music-craft here is strong and I've already flipped this split over four times. —N.L. Dewart (Traffic Street)

#### SHACKLES, THE: Self-titled: 7"

I like the name of this band (It's cute! Even though I imagine shackles aren't really very cute at all!), and I really like the paper the record comes in, thick and textured with a gorgeous pink color. Unfortunately, the singing is a little watery for my tastes. The songs, overall, didn't do much for me or stick with me after the first listen, but I did like the sound of the keyboards in the second one. The guitar is kind of garagey, but, for me, it just doesn't rock. I am missing the rock spirit! It's sweet, it's nice, but it's a bit mild, even when the last

song picked up at the end. —Jennifer Federico (Sweet Rot)

#### SHANG-A-LANG / BRICKFIGHT: Split: 7"

Shang-A-Lang: Turn that frown into kickass DIY punk jams. As the dust of time settles on the shoulders of Las Cruces, New Mexico's musical heritage, I do hope that these four troubadours tricking every last watt, amp, and atom out of their testy 4-track get remembered as being as a flickering flame of hope. I also hope Chris Mason never starts a cult, because that's something I might consider joining, and I think cults are stupid. Brick Fight: Since I know nothing about musical equipment, I've always wondered if there was an amp or effects pedal that you could switch on that's labeled "sound British." Perhaps Rancid's got that patented. Speaking of, Brick Fight sounds like a lot like early Rancid and late '90s not-very-pop pop punk with a lot of snot, say, like the Nobodys, with less porn in the monitors. Hey Mitch, congrats on your first release. —Todd (Facepalm, myspace.com/facepalmrecords)

#### SHELLSHAG / THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB: Split: 7"

Plan-It-X Records paved the way for a ton of shitty PC folk punk and pop punk bands and labels. I'm proud to say that I've loved almost all of those shitty bands and labels. This record typifies everything that is oh so right about this minor, laughable, and ultimately irresistible subgenre.

Shellshag is an absolute must, a two-piece male/female off-key folk punk duo that always sounds like they're performing on a spaceship. First wave Plan-It-Xers This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb likewise continue to amuse with their stripped-down, folksy, pop punk purity. Unplug your electric guitar and see if you can come up with something as rocking. It's doubtful. —Art Ettinger (Starcleaner/Plan-It-X South)

#### SHELLSHAG / THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB: Split: 7"

On this 7", both bands cover each other and Shellshag actually goes on to do their take on "The Promise" by When In Rome. I'm a sucker for '80s pop culture nostalgia, so with their side having that and "What I Want" by This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, you already know one third of these six songs are great. As far as This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb's side, I don't think these guys are capable of making a bad song. The first two tracks are a little more shin diggin' than their other stuff, but somehow they manage to make me want to keep listening to country, down home folk music. Genres aside, all these tunes are just so upbeat-sounding and sing-songy that I can't help but keep spinning this 7". —N.L. Dewart (Starcleaner/Plan-It-X South)

#### SHORTCUTS, THE: 30 Pack: CDEP

Pretty straight forward, all lady pop punk from Minneapolis. Does it make me sexist that I want to say they remind me of The Soviettes? I mean, the guitars sound a lot like them (with

a little more noodling) and the vocals sound a lot like them (if only Susy sang). Fuck it. I'm going to say they sound like a really early Soviettes and refuse to believe that makes me a jerk. —Joe Evans III (Self-released, myspace.com/theshortcutsband)

#### SICK SICK BIRDS: Heavy Manners: LP

I wasn't in the control room when irony came like a rainbow—but was really a dark cloud of cynicism—into independent music. But there was a definite shift in the late '90s when the torch was passed from Superchunk to The Promise Ring and then somehow ended in the hands of dudes and dudettes with pants tight enough to cause muscle atrophy and the words "indie music" no longer meant "independent" of anything, while the "music" part was debatable at best. (I guess that's part of the irony. This time was also known as "The Golden Age of the Publicist." Draw your own conclusions.) So, if you're a punk rocker whose knee-jerk response isn't "Turn that fucker up! Play it faster! More 'fuck' in the monitor!" and your scope includes an active liking of Elvis Costello, The Carrie Nations, an appreciation for early Cure and Echo And The Bunnymen, and songs like "Detroit Has a Skyline Too," without the musty, creaky smell of imperfect nostalgia, I heavily recommend Sick Sick Birds. Early '80s indie pop, late '90s fireworks, late '00s recession-enforced honesty. Blood's pumping through decades of music effortlessly in each song. —Todd (Toxic Pop)



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**SKUNKFIX / STICK NO BILL /  
BRAYOK / THE RAY GRADYS:  
Punkrock Paradox: CD**

This is a four-way split CD with three of the four bands being from Malaysia and one from Philly. One of the Malaysian bands sings in Malay and the other two sing in English. I'm sure that at some point in my life I have listened to a band from Malaysia but I can't recall it off the top of my head. I guess I assumed that it was too repressive of a country to allow for punk rock, but it appears I stand corrected. The long and short of it, however, is that this is a horrible, horrible album. The bands all seem to center their styling on a ska or pop punk sound and the band that sings entirely in Malay does so off-key. The lyrics in English are often incomprehensible, at least as far as they are written in the liner notes (my favorite line: "I'm slaving for your asshole"). The content is often tedious, covering really stereotypical matter such as fuck that group, those people are stupid, and these people are dumb. And it's all done while playing really safe, uninteresting music. The one American band, The Ray Gradys, sound as though their songs were lifted directly from their vinyl and not the masters, as the sound quality makes some of their tracks almost unlistenable. I appreciate the effort of people trying to build their own scene, but I do hope that the bands included on here realize that punk rock is about more than being angry at various shades of "the man" and playing music that is worse

than the stuff my friends played in high school a dozen years ago. The only positive thing I got out of this is that they used the glossy paper material for their booklet and that smell reminded me of the higher-end baseball cards I used to collect as a kid. Good times. —Kurt Morris (Nervhous/Greenpeace/Anock Mearan)

**SMALLTOWN: Implosion: CD**

*Razorcake* #24's cover band from Sweden are back with their second full-length. The instantly recognizable departure is the inclusion of more instruments: vibes, handclaps, horns, zigger fish, and accordion. Still in place are Kalle's melancholic lyrics sung in a smoke-and-exhaustion voice, clean but toothy musicianship, and the overwhelming evidence that these are some down dudes making the music they want to without trapping themselves in previously made boxes. The extra textures aren't bothering me in the slightest. I celebrate *Give 'Em Enough Rope* and *London Calling* equally. And we're not talking a huge leap, as, say, from The Jam to the Style Council. Although, technically, I may be wrong since I'm no musician, *Implosion* is ensnared at mid-pace from the first song to the last. It never explodes—and there a couple of gangbuster opportunities in this album. It never jumps, shouts, skitters and wails, and it never goes completely quiet. So, although I can appreciate the care that went into the songs—like the details on miniature plastic models—I

just don't feel that buzzing impact of *The Music* or their early 7"s. This record is definitely well made, but as much as it pains me to say, *Implosion* bores me. I tried. And twenty-five listens in, it's not taking hold. Man, I feel like a dick. —Todd (Deranged)

**SMITH WESTERNS, THE: Self-titled: LP**

After years and years of reviewing, my expectations are incredibly low. Then an LP like this one comes along! The Smith Westerns play psychedelic power pop really well. There's a lot going on with this record—sure, the music of the Soft Boys and the lyrics of John Felice are obvious influences. But what I'm into is the Smith Western's guitar playing—amateurish Roger McGuinn-style playing pervades—and the production of this LP, which sounds like dynamite on your speakers. On repeated listens, this album only gets better. It's like a fucking raucous version of the Rain Parade, then shit starts going T-Rex on your ass. One of the most eclectic albums I've heard in a long time, with the variation and prowess of the Deadly Snakes at their best. Unless a musical revolution happens—one that makes the Nerves sound like Captain and Tennille—this album will be one of the ten best of 2009. Good lord! —Ryan Leach (HoZac, hozacrerecords.com)

**SNAZZY BOYS, THE: Self-titled: LP**

This reminds me a lot of old school British punk a la The Damned, but I could just be racist over The Snazzy

Boys' accents. One thing's for sure, their brand of punk has The Briefs written all over it. It's difficult to pinpoint what makes some seemingly derivative bands doing basic pop punk sound more genuine than others. After all, most the time it's the same basic four chords and blues-based guitar solos and riffs. But I think for The Snazzy Boys, it's their cohesiveness as a band, their precise drumming, quirky back-up vocals, and upbeat up-tempo approach to all their songs. It'd be truly a waste of time to shout out specific songs on this album because all of them are good. This is one where you can lay the needle anywhere on the white vinyl and be ready to party. —N.L. Dewart (Pure Punk)

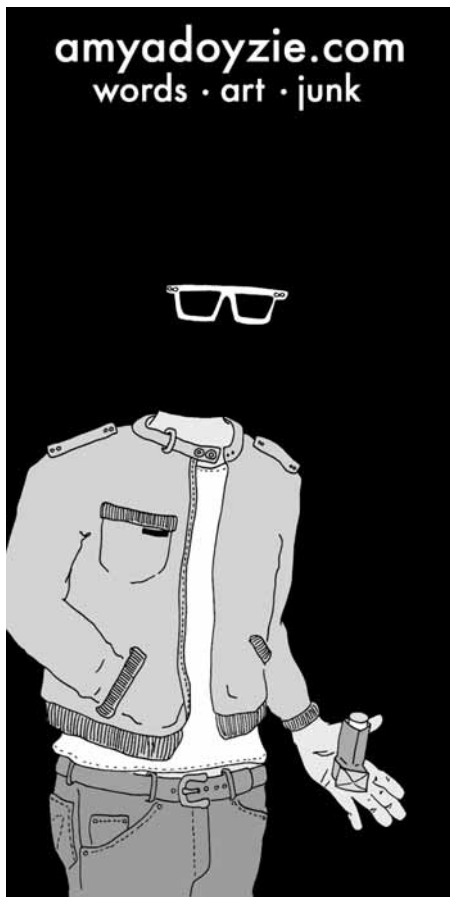
**SNEAKY PINKS: I Can't Wait: 7"**

So 1-2-3-4 G-Skull re-issued this masterpiece and the world can't be more thankful. Four songs that define a state of mind. Have you ever woken up, shotgunned a beer in your underwear, done a little dance for a little dog, and maybe ate waffles while listening to polka? If yes, then this is for you. This record makes me wanna howl at the moon. —Daryl (1-2-3-4 Go!)

**SONGS FOR MOMS:**

**I Used to Believe in the West: LP**

A couple of years ago when I got the first Songs For Moms LP, *The Worse Things Get...*, I was immediately taken. It was one of those instances of not knowing that you were looking for it until you found it. I'm glad that I heard



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them before I heard about them because I'm the kind of ass who usually stops listening after "country" is mentioned, and it's seems near impossible to get at what is going on with Songs For Moms without such description. Limiting them to that would, of course, be shameful. In fact, it's actually kinda hard to peg them—at least for me (which could be a reflection of the fact that I don't listen to any band close to this, more than anything). Anyhow, I mention my high regard for the previous album only because I was extremely hopeful for this LP. I didn't know exactly what my worry was, but I was worried—perhaps just overly hopeful. Well, dropping the needle on the first track assuaged all my nervousness about the record. Songs For Moms roll out another LP full of awesome folk-y, punk-y, country-y songs, but the songs aren't a rehashing of the last record and do stand well right next to it. This set of songs seems a little older. That is, they seem to reveal further exposure to world. Some of the hope and longing that was on the last record is replaced with more cynicism and anger. Things just sound a little darker this time around. Songs For Moms make being disappointed with the world sound so good. This is definitely one of the best LPs that I have heard this year. Do yourself a favor and don't sit on this! —Vincent (Thrillhouse)

#### SPREAD 'EM: *Pizza Crisis*: EP

Wow, a humor band that actually plays decent music. Kind of a rarity. Spread

'Em crank out tuneless hardcore punk that has some oi elements here and there. They have a song on here called "Jamie Lee Curtis Fingerbang," so you know you're in store for some lowbrow stuff, but funny, just the same. Which is certainly better than any number of "whacky thrash" bands that sing about whatever "whacky thrash" bands sing about. The singer, Brandon, has a great voice. Makes me wonder what he'd be like in a "serious" hardcore band. Comes on clear vinyl. Why they didn't press it on cheese yellow vinyl is a mystery. —M.Avg (Peterwalkee, peterwalkeerecords.com)

#### STRAWMEN: *Jack Rabbit*: 7"

Although tinny, I hear something decent brewing beneath the screamy-shouty vocals. Fast and simple country twang with a sloppy-punk bent that could stand some beefing up and tightening up. The unbridled vocals need some containment, but, all in all, a serious effort that just needs time to solidify into a cohesive group. "Jack Rabbit," "Red Bam" and a cover of the Compulsive Gamblers' "Sour & Vicious Man." —Jessica T. (Foul & Fair)

#### STRONGEST PROOF, THE: *Robot Eats a Steak*: CD

A pretentious glob of emo, rock, metal, and other stuff that rambles on six-and-nine-tenths songs longer than it should've. Made me wish I lived in an alternate universe where either I didn't have ears or they didn't have hands. —Jimmy Alvarado (Phratry)

#### SUBCITY: *Where's the Noise*: CD

A rootsy, retro ska album that branches out into a multitude of traditional genres with positive results. The most basic template is the U.K. '70s 2 Tone revival, but they mix it up with plenty of straight-up soul and some incredibly tasty horn arrangements. Sub City's songs tend to be mid tempo to slowish, confidently playing back in the pocket instead of the frantic sameness that drives me away from most ska. Highly recommended as a soundtrack to a pleasant day outdoors with friends and beers. —Jake Shut (Transistor 66, transistor66.com)

#### SUPERSUCKERS / HOOKED ON SOUTHERN SPEED: *Split*: 10"

Supersuckers and HOSS sing mostly Christmas songs on this split 10" with a highly detailed, Christmas-themed gatefold cover by Baron Von Evil. Snap one up, quick-like— you'll be like a kid at, well, Christmas. Plus, on this first pressing, the label forgot to list the Baron—if there are future pressings, it's likely this will be corrected. Supersuckers: "Call It Christmas Time," "Good Night for My Drinkin'"; HOSS: "Merry Christmas Dad," "Santa Loves Black Sabbath." Well done, ZK. —Jessica T. (Zodiac Killer)

#### TALBOT TAGORA:

##### *Lessons in the Woods or a City*: CD

Now we're talkin'! It took me a second to get into this, but now I really like it. My mind did wander at times, and I

feel like the album took a while to get going, but it's interesting and kind of weird, which often times really works for me. There are lots of varied tempos, even within the same song. Kind of discordant and cacophonous. The vocals, which, oddly, sometimes reminded me of Perry Farrell (only creepier), add to that. I might put them in the same camp as bands like the Chromatics, only not the next section over, maybe one across the park. What kind of camps do they have in Seattle, anyway?! Some of the guitar sound might or might not be Sonic Youth-inspired, and there were times I heard a wee bit of the A Frames. There were also some things about it that reminded me of another great band I got to review lately, Golden Triangle, and they are (coincidentally?! ) both on the same label, Hardly Art. The artwork is great; there's a really nice insert with lots of drawings (including a sweet moth picture) and lyrics. I think I will get into it even more after a couple more listens. Favorite lyrics so far: "the roads are red but they crucified it." And ah-ha! The rest of the lyrics in that song refer to a camping trip! It's all coming together now.... —Jennifer Federico (Hardly Art)

#### TAMARYN: *Weather War*: 7"

Appearance-wise, Tamaryn would have fit in well at a 1980s goth club. But the song contained on this record is far more complicated than anything you'd expect from a wannabe post-punk, dance hall gloom number. Interesting on all levels, the dark, brooding track makes me wonder

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what else the corny yet compelling Tamaryn has up her ruffled sleeve. This one-song, one-sided 7" on the elusive Hell, Yes! label is limited to just 300 copies (250 of the regular version, and 50 of a limited version with a gold, silkscreened cover). I think I'm going to have to start wearing eye shadow if I hear it again. —Art Ettinger (Hell, Yes!, myspace.com/hellyeshellyeshellyes)

#### **TERRIOR BUTE: *Realm Dwellers*: CD**

Terror Bute is a three-piece band from Milwaukee and their sound is comprised of yelling party vocals, keyboards, and drums. It seems like their sound is reminiscent of the defunct Nebraska screamo/punk/post-hardcore band, Bright Calm Blue, minus guitars. The disc has eleven songs in twenty-six minutes and it does a good job of getting its point across in that time. The first and last tracks are filler, but, otherwise, this is the musical equivalent of an exclamation point. I say that with the stipulation that I have a feeling that Terror Bute is one of those bands that is better live than they are on their recordings. I can only hope their live show matches the energy they seem to display on the album. —Kurt Morris (Vicious Pop)

#### **TITLE FIGHT:**

##### ***The Last Thing You Forget*: CD**

Crisp production, big melodies, and a vocalist who can hit all the right notes and still sound a little ragged and roughhewn. While I'm always impressed with the seamless quality

that bands like this almost always showcase playing live, it takes a lot more to sell me on an album. And I'm really not sure why, as Title Fight seems to be mashing all the right buttons, but there's something here that's falling just a little bit flat. It just seems like nowhere on *The Last Thing You Forget* do these guys ever really ever go off—there's a sense of restraint here that just doesn't work in their favor. I feel like they're capable of going ape-shit crazy, but they're just meekly walking around, pretending to be orangutans. Know what I mean? To their credit, I'm hearing echoes of bands like Saves The Day, Lifetime, and labelmates Death Is Not Glamorous, but they're distant ones—Title Fight's well into the process of firmly carving out their own place. It's just that I don't really feel like they're quite there yet. Decent melodic punk stuff, but it's just a little too unfocused and tame for me. —Keith Rosson (Run For Cover, runforcoverrecords.com)

#### **TODI STRONGHANDS / VICKI B.: Split: CD**

This is a singer/songwriter CD with songs striped down to vocal and a guitar track. The album insert has cut and pasted song listings in what looks like a photocopied picture all in a worthwhile DIY package. This split effort between Todi Stronghands and Vicki B. is refreshing in the fact it doesn't seem to fall for any of the typical singer songwriter traps. There's no glockenspiels or Hammond organs

to show how indie or classically trained their friends are. Some nails are left unhammered on this CD, with some random guitar strums being a little off at times. What these two deliver here is straight-ahead guitar folk songs that feel like they're made from pure intentions. —N.L. Dewart (Todi Stronghands)

#### **TRANZMITORS: *Busy Singles*: CD**

This is a singles compilation from the Tranzmitors, which actually sounds coherent enough to be a standalone LP. I never heard the band's full lengths, but this is a great chunk of power pop. These guys strike me as the modern successors to the driving power popper of the Pointed Sticks and the Exploding Hearts. A lot of the songs are built around a foundation of keyboards, crunchy Rickenbacker-style jangle, and lyrics about girls. Plus, you get the vocal variety pack of the croony dude and the more gravelly dude. I would name names as to who has which voice, but without seeing them live I couldn't tell you. These guys would be the perfect band to play a punk rock prom along with the Undertones. My main problem with the disk is that, for me, it's frontloaded with my favorite track, "Bigger Houses, Broken Homes," being the very first song. It's one of the greatest, driving, upbeat songs about suburban breakdown I've heard since the Briefs cover of "Dead in the Suburbs" and the Buzzcocks' "Something's Gone Wrong Again." Don't get me wrong, most of

the rest of the songs are solid gold, but for me "Bigger Houses..." is platinum. —Adrian (Deranged)

#### **TROPIEZO:**

##### ***Creando Nuevos Enemigos*: CD**

It appears these kids are making one helluva concerted effort to become the Minutemen of modern hardcore. This is the third release I've seen from them in the past twelve months, with another sixteen songs that rarely pass the two-minute mark to add onto an already heaping pile of similar tunes. Mind you, I'm not complaining, 'cause they are easily one of the best bands out there right now, but one has to wonder where the fuck they find the time to crank out so many songs, let alone rehearse them to the level of taut, stop-on-a-dime perfection they consistently turn in? Do they have jobs? Do they sleep? Are they human? That said, this is another collection of spastic hardcore that flies from one tempo to the next mid-song in a way that has to be heard to be understood, delivered with a level of precision one expects more from a Teppan-Yaki style chef than a punk band. What all this hyperbolic rambling translates into is that this is one prolific and seriously badass band and they've released another CD worthy of much attention and listening time. —Jimmy Alvarado (discosdehoy.com)

#### **TROUBLEMAKE / TURKISH TECHNO:**

##### **Split: 7" EP**

Preamble (or pre-ramble, your choice): At some point over the past

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year, I became aware of Traffic Street Records. I was on a rather well known "social networking" site looking at band pages. Turkish Techno, being a band I recently heard and liked, was one of the bands I was looking at. There was something on their page about an upcoming release on Traffic Street (which is this release). This, naturally, prompted me to look into this TSR. I saw that there were a few upcoming releases that interested me from TSR. I was mostly stoked that the second (planned) release involved Turkish Techno. As it turned out, several of the releases slated for release after this split came out before this one—so goes punk rock. Anyhow, I'm glad to have it in my hands finally. Troublemaker: Here's the band that I hadn't heard of, and whose name was making me unsure whether I wanted to hear them. After having heard them, I can say that I would listen to 'em again. They lay down two solid tracks that sound like more technical (early Lookout!-era) Queers with Justin (from Anti-Flag) filling in for Mr. King. In other words, Troublemaker deliver some decent pop punk that isn't exactly by the numbers. Middle ramble: Now that I think about it, I don't know why I had no problem checking Turkish Techno out, while being skeptical about Troublemaker because of their name. Turkish Techno: Gruff-vocaled punk for the bearded and non-bearded alike. Their songs on here are bit simpler and more straight ahead than those on the Brokedowns and Shang-

A-Lang splits, but they'll still make you hop up, down, and all around. The only thing kinda whack about this side is that the two Turkish Techno tracks were recorded on different occasions, which is immediately apparent aurally—but really nothing at all. —Vincent (Traffic Street)

#### **TROUBLEMAKER: Self-titled: 7"**

Quite the mixed bag with these fellows. On one hand, they kick out five short blasts unflinchingly reminiscent of Paint It Black's earlier material—even the vocals are eerily similar to Yemin's. On the surface, it's some reasonably decent stuff, if a little unremarkable. But the lyrics manage to come across as simultaneously self-loathing and yet terribly corny—the breakdown on "Loveless" is what sealed the deal for me: the music stops and the singer belts out "No one will ever fucking love me!" I just can't deal with hardcore vocalists talking about how alone and unloved they are when there's three or four other dudes standing behind them serving as the musical vehicle for their self-obsessed lamentations. It's a big world out there, rife with problems—if you're gonna focus exclusively on yourself, you'd better have something better than a *Cat in the Hat*-style A-A-B-B rhyme scheme going on. —Keith Rosson (Neutral Territory)

#### **TV SUICIDES: Nerve Damage: CD-R**

Lyrical, it sounds like they've been immersing themselves in the same less obvious subject matter the early

incarnation of the Misfits occasionally mined. Musically, they like the mid-tempo middle ground of proto-hardcore and feature a singer who sounds like he's been listening to Rollins-fronted Black Flag bootlegs circa 1983. They ain't bad on the whole, but the recordings here sound like fourth generation mp3 rips of mp3 rips that weren't that good to begin with, with that weird squeal-in-a-tunnel quality to the cymbals. —Jimmy Alvarado (TV Suicides)

#### **VARIOUS ARTISTS: 8 Acoustic Comp: CD-R**

Three-way split of acoustic stuff. Julia (um, I think that name's been taken, ma'am) contributes three straight-up folk ballads, essentially all about the dude that got away. It's inherently cheesy stuff, but reasonably well done, all things considered. Coffee shop rock, but Julia's voice does have a nice, forlorn quality to it. The Dead Pawns are a not-so-good bluegrass band with way tuneless and bellowed vocals, and Joey Corman just sounds like your average guy playing shit on an acoustic guitar: a little awkward, with some randomly decent moments. Certainly didn't think Julia would be the best of the bunch, but she was. The best part is that while this is some tame acoustic folk stuff, the cover's positively brimming over with a bunch of skulls. Also contains a Dead Pawns song called "Ballad of a Blasphemer" and a quote from Jesus on the back cover. Pretty odd release overall. —Keith Rosson (8)

#### **VARIOUS ARTISTS:**

##### **A Product of Six Cents II: CD**

Forty-nine tracks of the fast and faster are on this here disc (nine of which come from the *APOSC I 7*). A lot of the tracks blast by like blurred blazes of rage. But don't worry, this isn't forty-nine tracks of lackluster Spazz and Infest idolatry and we-can't-play-so-we-play-fast-hoping-that-nobody-will-notice-and-call-it-grind grind. Just like most comps, there's going to be some stuff that you can't stand and some stuff that you can't live without. This comp has a lot more of the good than the bad. And, furthermore, the stuff that you wish wasn't around is so fast and so short that it is hardly worth mention. Once you assess the track and realize that you don't wanna hear it, the next track will be playing. You will be reaching for the case to see which band is playing so that you can take note of which band is desensitizing you more often than not. —Vincent (A Product Of Six Cents, [myspace.com/aproductofsixcents](http://myspace.com/aproductofsixcents) / To Live A Lie, [tolivealie.com](http://tolivealie.com))

#### **VARIOUS ARTISTS:**

##### **Annihilate Your Life: CD**

A predominantly hardcore compilation featuring, in order of appearance, DIHYF, Salted Wounds, Clusterfux, Hardsole, Man0Alive, Cunnilingus, Döersovit, Truckasaurus, Corn Whisky, Fetal Hymen, Infernal Racket, Dead Pan, One Per Coffin, Zombie Hate Brigade, and Carrion Crawler. Would've liked a wee bit more diversity in sounds and styles,

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but most of the bands here ain't bad at what they do and fans of the genre should find much to get them off. Best tune here, however, is the tune by Ernie and Cookie Monster they no doubt jacked from a *Sesame Street* record or broadcast. American treasures they both are and, despite their well documented addictions to rubber waterfowl and cookies, worthy of all the adulation they've received over the past four decades. —Jimmy Alvarado (Rawker)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Bring It On Back: A Compilation Dedicated to Simplicity and Honesty*: CD**

Assembled by one Daryl Gussin of this here publication, this hodgepodge mix of live recordings and vocal outtakes (like an answering machine message) was apparently all taped using a digital camera. While the recording quality expectedly takes a hit (the insert refers to the lo-fi element), the assortment is endearing and earthy. The project's finest moment is its first: "Rio Manzanaras" by Panacea String Band is a smooth, gorgeously done piece about a river that, in a better world, would punctuate a farewell between two lovers at a Spanish drive-in flick. God Equals Genocide's contribution ("Ya Never Know") is pretty good, too. Other inclusions of note: a recording of a recording of "Joe Hill" by ambitious activist/entertainer Paul Robeson and the swooning and sweet "Lovesick Lycanthrope" by Mincing Pixie. —Reyan Ali (Self-released)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Dangerous Intersections IV: 7"***

This is a four-band pop punk comp that is not my thing, but all the bands sound pretty good. The standout for me is Barrakuda McMurder, whose short entry on this record sounds a bit like The Queers and has a similar boyish sense of humor. The Strait A's "Go Away" is female fronted and, while not snotty enough for my taste, has the sensibilities of a great punk anthem. All four bands have personality and write descent songs. Again, it's not my thing, but I get a good feeling off it. If your tastes range from Hot Water Music to The Queers, I would think this would be a great record for you. —Billups Allen (Traffic Street)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Dangerous Intersections III: 7"***

Not sure how much of this stuff is exclusive, but Traffic Street's put out a pretty solid winner here. The Closet Fairies come out swinging with their cover of "Skumpunk," which sounds like a snot-nosed Fleshes covered "Sonic Reducer" in about ninety seconds or so, and The Dopamines come across as a more frayed and intelligent Copyrights. Weakest track is by Apocalypse Meow, where they wax poetic about how cool it would be to be a baby again, and Todd Congelliere—with more of a URTC flair than a Toys That Kill one—does an awesome, keyboard-heavy jam that somehow sounds forlorn and toe-tapping all at once. Three out of four ain't bad at all,

especially when I realized I just found a few new bands that I'll be checking out in the future. Watch this label. —Keith Rosson (Traffic Street)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *DC-Jam Skate Rock Vol.1: 2 x CD***

When I saw the front of this disc, the first thing I thought was "Whoa, what's with the crappy computer art? I wonder what they're trying to pass off as skate rock." Well, when I flipped the case over and started reading the bands, I was treated to a who's who of skateboard-fueled punk rock both past and present. The old guard is well represented by bands like JFA, Big Boys, McRad, Minus-One, and Government Issue while the current rippers are led by the likes of Frontside Five, Off With Their Heads, and Wednesday Night Heroes. Not to mention several rad bands that I had never heard before. This compilation stands up well with the early Thrasher comps. I'm stoked for Vol. 2! —Ty Stranglehold (DC-Jam)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Econo-Comp*: CD**

Thirty-five tunes from an equal number of bands, many of which I'm fairly certain hail from Southern California. You'll find here tracks from YAPO, Dead Lazlo's Place, Entropy, Naked Aggression, The Vermin, Death Mickies, Last Rights, Homesick Abortions, Outtastep, Oppressed Logic, California Redemption, and many others. On the whole, this reminds me of '90s compilations like

*Nothing to Believe In* and *Backyard Shenanigans*, the latter of which also has track by a number of the bands here. The recurring genre is thrashy hardcore, but the songs are catchy enough and there's enough diversity in delivery while adhering to the genre's rigid constraints that the bands manage to refrain from sounding all the same, for the most part. —Jimmy Alvarado (recordsontap.com)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Half-Assed Chicago*: LP**

This regional comp LP is too good to be true. The first three tracks go Brokedowns, M.O.T.O., Sass Dragons! Hot damn! Releases like this remind me how good it can be. Exclusive songs from all bands, clear green vinyl, a wide variety of punk subgenres. Fun, fun times. Even bands I don't necessarily like listening to, I enjoy on this record. After much contemplating, I could only think of two Chicago bands I really like that aren't on here. Pick this up. —Daryl (Johann's Face)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: *Streetpunk & Disorderly 2009 / Longshot Promo EP #2: 2 x 7"***

You wouldn't know that streetpunk and oi are in trouble given the release of this killer double comp of eight of the world's finest mainline specimens: Alternate Action, Marching Orders, Harrington Saints, Secret Army, Bad Co. Project, Tower Blocks, Klasse Kriminale, and The Analogs. It's a solid mix of new and more experienced



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bands, with the only disappointing track coming from Italy's usually unbeatable Klasse Kriminale. Both records are on marbled vinyl, giving a nice, fancy touch to a typically barebones subgenre. These were given away at the 2009 Punk & Disorderly festival in Berlin. I wasn't there, but Australia's Marching Orders blew me away when I saw them at the 2008 East Coast of Oi festival in Allentown, Pennsylvania before the show erupted into a mini-riot after Oxblood performed. But I digress. —Art Ettinger (Joe Pogo/Longshot)

# VERMILLION SANDS, THE / MOVIE STAR JUNKIE: Split 7"

Each band here got one song and one side of the split, but from the liner notes it looks like all the same people are in both groups. They just play different parts in each. Vermillion Sands' slow dance song sounds like creepy carnival-esque music. With the organs and Wurlitzer, it's very atmospheric and visceral. Their songwriting is strong and reminds me of Leonard Cohen, for some reason. It's such a great and interesting song. The Movie Star Junkies track has a lot of the same aesthetics as Vermillions Sands, but it just doesn't capture that same mood in that same impactful way. —N.L. Dewart (Rijapov, rijapovrecords.blogspot.com)

**VIC RUGGIERO: On the Rag Time: 7" EP**  
Music can be a personal tour guide to some other place and time and when listening to such date- and location-specific music such as Ruggiero's, *On*

*The Rag Time* vinyl, I'm extremely guarded about letting myself get carried too far away. That said, the sweet, innocent nature of this old-time blues music makes me feel like I'm in some Louisiana parlor and I can't help but smile. I don't find myself listening to this kind of stuff normally, but if you're into time warp blues, piano man/songwriter stuff, then this 7" is for you. —N.L. Dewart (Silver Sprocket Bicycle Club)

# VICIOUS CYCLE: Pale Blue Dot: CD

To be perfectly honest, Vicious Cycle's Fucked Up affiliation does very little for me. Prior to hearing this record, quite a few word-of-mouth FU comparisons actually dissuaded me from checking this record out, expecting the mediocre-hardcore-with-uninteresting-indie-rock-interludes version of FU to shine through on this new Vicious Cycle release. Luckily, *Pale Blue Dot* refrains from incorporating any of that awkward melodrama and instead sounds only slightly (if at all) like FU's early material. I actually still hear a lot of the Motörhead-meets-Negative Approach sound of Vicious Cycle's earlier output, but *Pale Blue Dot* finds the band injecting a ton more melody and expanding on the song structures of those records. Jonah Falco (of Career Suicide, Fucked Up, etc.) did a hell of a job recording this album by creating a super unique sound that definitely warrants Fugazi comparisons without sounding particularly akin to that band musically. This is a very cool record

that manages to cover a lot of ground without sounding at all disjointed, while staying comfortably within American hardcore territory. I'm digging this big time. —Dave Williams (Deranged)

# VISITORS, THE: Tropic of Cancer: 7"

Pleasant surprise. Pop punk, but with more of a '70s thing going on than a shitty Queens/Weasel-core thing. There are rotating female/male vocals that help keep it interesting as well. The whole thing is put together quite nicely to boot, with nice art, crazy looking vinyl, and a download postcard. I'm into it. —Joe Evans III (House Party)

# WAR FROM A HARLOT'S MOUTH: In Shoals: CD

With a band name like that, I was expecting some kill-your-girlfriend-core bullshit. That was not the case, thank goodness. WFAHM plays metalcore with punk's indignant fury. There's double bass drum action and the songs are loaded with off-time parts and technical bits, but the songwriting is of such a high caliber that the virtuoso parts don't sound tacked on, and never compromise the music's drive. I won't lie, I usually hate this type of stuff, but this band is so good at what they do that it's impossible not to enjoy and appreciate it. —CT Terry (Lifeforce)

**WE ARE ALL SAVAGES: Self-titled: CD**  
Loud, kinda crusty and metallic around the edges, atonal, and angry. Vocals

are a buried a wee bit too much, but otherwise this ain't all that bad. —Jimmy Alvarado (We Are All Savages)

# WE'RE INTO SURVIVAL: Booby-Trap: CDEP

A power pop riff similar to early Weezer or Elastica, kicks off the first track and leads into vocals like Pete Doherty. More Babyshambles than The Libertines, We're Into Survival tickled my earbuds with these three songs and have been on regular rotation in my disc player. Garage pop fun. My only regret is that there weren't more songs. Recommended. —Kristen K. (Realfnlove, realfucknlove.com)

# WHAT IF...: Self-titled: 7"

When I picked up this 7", I was put off by the cover. The skulls and hearts motif is totally played out, though this art has a whimsy you don't see often, and the color is well done. Still, I was willing to give it a chance, and it was worth it: Fun songs about getting fucked up, and maybe fucked, a few poignant observations on living poor and happy, rather than relentlessly chasing a buck. The playing gets tighter as the 7" rolls on (they crammed six songs on it); I bet they tear it up live. They included the lyrics, which are always a bonus for anyone who's shot their hearing at shows over the years, and the back cover is my favorite illustration on any record I've seen: A red "What If..." belicensed-plated dune buggy heading off into the horizon, the sunset being

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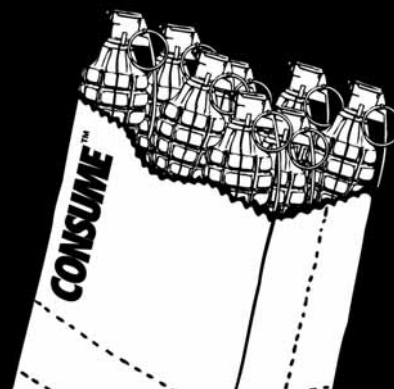
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a warm, glowing foamy mug of beer. Check it out. —Samantha Beerhouse (Do Ya Hear We)

#### WORMBURNER: Self-titled: 7"

Salinas Records has an amazing track record and this 7" does not disappoint. Most record labels usually stumble by this point, but I don't think I've heard a Salinas release that I don't enjoy. There really needs to be a better name for this besides post-hardcore indie punk. Oh, I've got it. How about we call it awesome? —Bryan Static (Salinas)

#### WOVEN BONES:

##### *Your Sorcery b/w Howlin Woof: 7"*

Creepy crawly punk with a surf swing. The vocals are campy and sinister and remind me of INXS or Love And Rockets. This music sounds like a nightsweat, and if there isn't any sneering going on in their band photos, I'm going to be a little let down. —CT Terry (Sweet Rot)

#### XBRAINIAX: Deprogrammed: CDR

This is a West Coast tour-only advance copy of a full length yet to be released. Being already familiar with this band, I kinda knew what to expect. Or at least I thought I knew. To help put things into perspective, let's consider the fact that they recently released a collection CD of all their previously released material and it all adds up to ninety-nine songs from an EP, several splits, and compilations. There are only fourteen songs on this CD. The first of which is not the ten second beat down

I was expecting. More like a two and a half minute jam with a steady drum beat (which is unusual, given their track record.) After that song, forget it. The songs explode into a frenzy of blastcore and thrash that has not been this entertaining to listen to since Spazz. They love to keep you guessing. The second (and I do mean second) you wrap your brain around a blast part or guitar riff, it's over and the song morphs into an entirely different being. Like an amoeba of powerviolence. Right after they're done slapping you silly with their speed, they decide to slow down and drag your unconscious body through a dark, smelly hallway of an apartment building once inhabited by members of Grief and Noothgrush for a good ten minutes on the last track. They recently came through town and, regrettably, I missed them. You, however, should not miss out on one of the best powerviolence releases in years. —Juan Espinosa (Self released, no contact info.)

#### XWALRUSX / IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS: Split 10"

Ten inches, thirty songs. That's one and a half songs per inch of vinyl. There are soundbites on the record. One of the band members is wearing a luchador mask. Is powerviolence back? xWalrusx play blazing fast hardcore with scene-centric lyrics that balance hilarity and anger. Their side of the insert has photos of the cast of *Law and Order SVU* and a list of vegan eateries in Tucson. Important Documents mixed their side

so that all you can hear are cymbals and vocals. —CT Terry (Bonecutter, bonecutterrecords@hotmail.com)

#### YAKUZA: Transmutations: 2 x LP

Yakuza draw from a variety of musical genres to create their brand of progressive metal. There's some jazz, some grind, some black metal (particularly the vocals on a few songs), ambient, and Eastern influences seeping in. As a result, this album is a collection of mixed results, some good, and some pretty bad. First off, there's not much of a seamless flow, as you get the overly tech grind song ("Meat Curtains"), then an ambient type song ("Egocide"). When they find their stride in songs like the aforementioned "Egocide," "Perception Management," and Justin K. Broadricks' (Jesu, Godflesh) remix of "The Blinding." Unfortunately, the majority of songs tend to drag on and on, getting buried in being overly musical and trying to cram as much as they can into each piece. The packaging is nice. Gatefold sleeve, with minimal layout of red type and graphics on a black field, which captures the tone of the album well. Limited to 500 copies. —M.Avg (Scenester Credentials, scenecred.com)

#### ZEBRAS / E=MC HAMMER:

##### *Parasitic Clones under the Strong Arm of the Robotic Machine: Split: LP*

I imagine Zebras think they're pretty cute. Reminds me quite a bit of spastic, synth-heavy bands of yore like Red Light Sting and Sick Lipstick and shit like that. They seem to be

shooting for the sassy, teased-hair and white-belt audience—an audience that may or may not be still around. I mean, this would've been totally appropriate if it'd come out on Dim Mak or Sound Virus in, say, 2002, but culturally, I think this particular genre may have (thankfully) run its course. Unfortunately, they turned out to be head and shoulders above their vinyl partners. E=MC Hammer sounds like a bunch of people with spiritual hard-ons for Ruins and John Zorn and whatnot. As a result, they come across as pretentious as hell and trying way too hard to create something "cerebral" and "challenging": the lyric sheet shows three songs with different names but the exact same lyrics (not that I was actually able to match up the vocalist's yowls to any of the printed material), and there's no real discernable moment where you can tell which "song" ends and the next begins. It pretty much comes across as some dipshit yelling and growling nonsense over some tape loops and guitars, drums, and keyboards. It's pretty sad when the best you're hoping for out of a record is thirty seconds of musical cohesiveness. Possibly one of the most beautiful pieces of vinyl I've ever seen, so it's a shame that the music itself falls so solidly between okay and shitty. —Keith Rosson (Secret, mspace.com/secretrecords)

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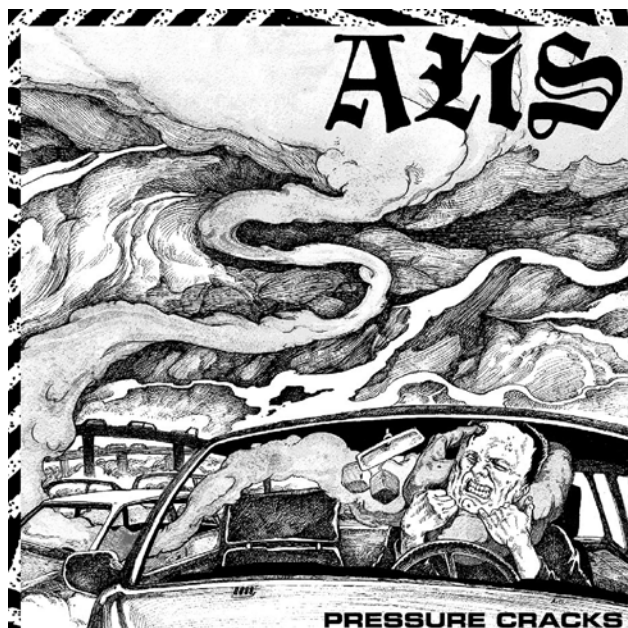
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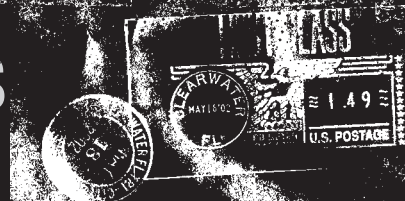
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- **Dead Mechanical**, 1014 E. 36<sup>th</sup> St., Baltimore, MD 21218
- **Dead Panic**, 285 Broad St., SF, CA 94112
- **Deranged**, 2700 Lower Rd., Roberts Creek, BC, V0N 2W4, Canada
- **Dirt Cult**, 713 Stagecoach Dr., Las Cruces, NM 88011
- **Disillusioned**, Flat 1, 51 St. Johns Ave., Bridlington, E. Yorkshire, YO16 4ND, England
- **Do Ya Hear We**, PO Box 6037, Chattanooga, TN 37401
- **Don Giovanni**, PO Box 628, Kingston, NJ 08528
- **Douchemaster**, 330 Glenwood Ave SE, Atlanta, GA 30322
- **Eolian**, 44 NE Holland St., Portland, OR 97211
- **Etixe**, PO Box 60642, Washington, DC 20039
- **Fashionable Idiots**, PO Box 580131, Minneapolis, MN 55458
- **Fat**, PO Box 193690, SF, CA 94119
- **Flat Black**, 6191 Santa Catalina, Garden Grove, CA 92845
- **Forcefield**, PO Box 26946, Richmond, VA 23261
- **Foul & Fair**, 34 Fairfield, Lower Coverdale, New Brunswick, E1J 0A2, Canada
- **Frantic City**, 31 Rue A. Barine, 17000 La Rochelle, France
- **Geykido Comet**, PO Box 93324, Las Vegas, NV 89193
- **Greenpeace**, c/o pidot, 1465 Keratong 5, 26900 Bandar Tun Razak, Pahang, Malaysia
- **Hardly Art**, PO Box 2007, Seattle, WA 98111
- **Hardware**, PO Box 1646, 49006 Osnabrück, Germany
- **House Party**, 2629 Connolly St., Halifax, NS B3L 3M4, Canada
- **Humans, The**, Attn: John Ludwick 1036 Watt St., Reno, NV 89509
- **In The Red**, PO Box 50777, LA, CA 90050
- **Inimical**, PO Box 2803, Seattle, WA 98111
- **Inkblot**, c/o Sam Sputo / Faith Laurel, 216 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. #3C, Brooklyn, NY 11215
- **It's Alive**, 11411 Hewes St., Orange, CA 92869
- **Joe Pogo**, PO Box 281, East Syracuse, NY 13057
- **Johann's Face**, PO Box 479164, Chicago, IL 60647
- **Killer**, Pl 237, 28101 Pori, Finland
- **Lifeforce**, PO Box 639, Ambler, PA 19002
- **Longshot**, 980 Harrison St., SF, CA 94107
- **Meat King**, PO Box 26112, Lansing, MI 48909
- **Meaty Beaty**, 980 Harrison St., SF, CA 94107
- **Mississippi**, 4009 N. Mississippi Ave., Portland, OR 97227
- **Muy Autentico**, 4107 University Ave., Riverside, CA 92501
- **My Mind's Eye**, 13727 Madison, Lakewood, OH 44107
- **Nardwuar The Human Serviette**, PO Box 27021, 1395 Marine Dr., West Vancouver, BC, V7T 2X8, Canada
- **Nervhous**, c/o Nizang, 49 Jalan Rahim Kajai, Tmn Tur Dr Ismail, 60000 KL, Malaysia
- **Neutral Territory**, 315 Wellington Court, Jackson, NJ 08527
- **Nickel and Dime/Triple X**, PO Box 555712, LA, CA 90055
- **No Idea**, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604
- **October Party**, Brothaugen 34, 5200 Os, Norway
- **Panic**, PO Box 23306, Seattle, WA 98102
- **Pee**, PO Box 238, Marden, South Australia 5070
- **Phratry**, PO Box 14267, Cincinnati, OH 45250
- **Plan-It-X South**, 720 Pickens Ave., Pensacola, FL 32503
- **Pop Sweatshop**, PO Box 460954, Denver, CO 80246
- **Priceduijkes**, Krokusstraat 17, 2560 Nijlen, Belgium
- **Pure Punk**, C.P. 214, 43100 Parma, Italy
- **Rawker**, PO Box 746437, Arvada, CO 80006
- **Resist**, PO Box 372 Newtown NSW Australia 2042
- **Rumbletowne**, PO Box 663, Olympia, WA 98507
- **Salinas**, PO Box 2802, Detroit, MI 48202
- **Saustex**, PO Box 691356, San Antonio, TX 78289-1356
- **Scarey**, Carlo Calemme, Via Galleria, 32/1, 10025, Pino Torinese (TO), Italy
- **Scenester Credentials**, PO Box 1275, Iowa City, IA 52244
- **Snuffy Smiles**, 12-A Kamikousaicho, Shichiku Kita-ku Kyoto 603-8117, Japan
- **Sound Study Recordings**, PO Box 2761, Gainesville, FL 32602
- **Starcleaner**, 1020 Bushwick Ave., Brooklyn NY 11221
- **Step 1 Music**, PO Box 21, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 72Z UK
- **Stress Domain**, 20345 W. Rue Crevier Apt. 506, Canyon Country, CA 91351
- **Stubborn**, PO Box 5186, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-5186
- **Suburban Home**, PO Box 40757, Denver, CO 80204
- **Super Secret**, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767
- **Sweet Rot**, PO Box 78025, Vancouver, BC V5N 5W1, Canada
- **Talent Moat**, 1124 Sutter St., SF, CA 94109
- **Telephone Explosion**, 1077 Dundas St. West, Toronto, ON, M6J 1W9, Canada
- **Thought Squad**, PO Box 40016, Pasadena, CA 91114
- **Three Dimensional**, 201 W. 15th St. #308, MPLS, MN 55403
- **Thrill Jockey**, PO Box 08038, Chicago, IL 60608
- **Thrillhouse**, 3422 Mission St., SF, CA 94110
- **Tic Tac Totally**, PO Box 558383, Chicago, IL 60655-8383
- **Todi Stronghands**, Po Box 513, Thessalon, ON POR 1L0, Canada
- **Top Tone**, PO Box 49480, Wichita, KS 67201
- **Toxic Pop**, 2619 Guilford Ave., Baltimore, MD 21218
- **Traffic Street**, 1114 F St. NE #308, Washington, D.C. 20002
- **Translation Loss**, PO Box 419, Harleysville, PA 19438
- **TV Suicides**, 21620 Hoffman, St. Clair Shores, MI 48082
- **TXME**, PO Box 534, Denton, TX 76202
- **Urban Pirate**, 1509 Bell Ave., Sheboygan, WI 53083
- **Vicious Pop**, 4023 N. Bartlett Ave., Shorewood, WI 53211
- **Volcom**, 1740 Monrovia Ave., Costa Mesa, CA 92627
- **We Are All Savages** c/o Jason Tidol, 979 Metropolitan Ave. #3R, Brooklyn, NY 11211
- **Wet Brain**, 3611 NE 50<sup>th</sup> St., Seattle, WA 98105
- **Wondertaker**, PO Box 470153, SF, CA 94147-0153
- **World**, PO Box 280537, Northridge, CA 91328
- **Zodiac Killer**, PO Box 20407, Cheyenne, WY 82009

# ZINE REVIEWS

Send all zines for review to:  
Razorcake,  
PO Box 42129, LA, CA.  
Please include a postal  
address (that's how we trade),  
the number of pages, the price,  
and whether or not you accept trades.



"In this issue,  
Ryan gives his take  
on radical teachers,  
tells us some dreams,  
and reviews some  
bumper stickers."

—Craven Rock  
MISHAP #26

**13 YEARS OF GOOD LUCK**, \$?,  
5½" x 7", screened and printed, 89 pgs.  
Beautifully printed with about  
a million interesting articles  
(DIY screenprinting, A History  
of Publishing, an interview with  
Bozo Texino, to scratch the cream),  
well-written memoirs, way decent  
comics, and the heartwarming story  
of a publishing company staying  
true for thirteen-plus years? Very  
much worth your dime. —Andrew  
Flanagan (Microcosm Publishing,  
222 S Rogers St., Bloomington,  
IN 47404-4936)

**BLACK CARROT** #13, \$2,  
5½" x 8½", photocopied, 28 pgs.  
*Black Carrot* was the first thing I  
grabbed out of this issue's box of  
review materials. I looked at the  
photocopied duct tape on the cover  
and the gay porn collage inside  
and went, "Yes! I love getting stuff  
like this!" You wanna make me  
happy? It's simple. Write up a few  
stories about your life's unique  
events, glue 'em down on top of  
some grainy photos, draw some  
private parts every few pages, and  
mail it to Razorcake. Guaranteed  
good review, as long as you don't  
bring up CrimethInc. or getting  
dumped. My favorite pieces in  
this zine were the ones on bisexual  
identity and the intro, which tied  
together airport bathrooms, Jewish  
funerals, family dynamics, and  
coping with death. —CT Terry (PO  
Box 830, Chicago, IL 60690)

**BLACK CARROT** #14, \$?,  
5½" x 8½", photocopied, 2 pgs.  
I'm kind of confused with this zine.  
I reviewed issue number twelve  
a while ago and a female wrote  
it. A male did this issue. Same  
mailing address, but different  
email. Weird. Anyway, this issue  
has fifty (actually a few less than  
that) short stories, most just a  
few paragraphs. I really enjoyed  
many of them, some making me  
laugh and others having me relate  
a great deal with the author who  
is twenty-nine and trying to make  
a go of it in Chicago. There is a

lot of farting and toilet humor, but  
some of it is pretty fucking hilarious  
like the story where the author talks  
about waking up, feeling sick, and  
going to throw up in the bathroom  
but also grabbing his cell phone in  
the process and then wondering,  
"Why did I do that? Who was I  
going to call in mid vomit?" This  
is a fun read that is perfect for  
time spent on the shitter. —Kurt  
Morris (Black Carrot, PO Box 830,  
Chicago, IL 60690)

**FEEDBACK** #4, \$2 ppd,  
11" x 4½", Xeroxed, 14 pgs.  
An entertaining and nicely drawn  
zine. Maybe I'm out of my depths  
here, but I would be interested to  
see this done without descriptions,  
but just titles and dialogue.  
However it shakes out, worth  
your stamps. —Andrew Flanagan  
(John Isaacson, 3613 SE 10th Ave,  
Portland, OR 97202)

**FREE BEER** #14, \$3,  
Photocopied, 5½" x 8½", 52 pgs.  
The cover's got a photo of a  
guy smoking a cig in front of a  
coffeemaker. The whole zine's  
handwritten, in all caps, in a manner  
that almost matches the writer's  
enthusiasm. The stories involve  
snow banks, joyrides without driver's  
licenses, small-town skaters pulling  
pranks on cops, coffee, coffee, and  
more coffee. There's even a drawing  
of a guy with a Mohawk playing  
board games. This is happy-go-lucky  
and larger than life, the quintessential  
punk perzine. I had feared that crafty  
people in Portland with vintage bikes  
had killed off this type of reading.  
I'm so glad I was wrong. —CT Terry  
(Barney Freebeer c/o Tea Krulos, PO  
Box 511553, Milwaukee, WI 53203)

**GENEVA13** #8, \$2,  
8½" x 11", printed, 56 pgs.  
We hear a lot about community,  
about DIY, about punk, about  
art, and about taking it all back.  
Rarely do people actually do that.  
These guys do, through seemingly  
genuine engagement and pride in  
their community. #8 has interviews

with a couple women from  
Geneva's Syrian community, the  
"punkastronomy" column (which is  
really just a super-into-it-astronomy  
column), and a public works essay  
by a city councilman. Like I said  
about their last issue: Geneva, you  
are luckier than many. —Andrew  
Flanagan (Geneva13, PO Box 13,  
Geneva, NY 14456)

**GRIOT** #6 / **PUDDN'HEAD** #5,  
postage/trade/\$2, 14" x 8½", 40 pgs.  
A split zine, two people writing each  
half, backwards stylee. The *Griot*  
half is better, featuring a charming  
interview with a modest success  
story, shittiness included, and  
some less-than-awful ruminations.  
*Puddin'Head* is the origins of a  
punk band and punk man, from my  
hometown of Minneapolis. Weird  
observations abound ("they both  
had crew cuts and liked to kiss  
their biceps") and the style is stilted  
journaling. *Griot* wins! —Andrew  
Flanagan (Mike Pudd'nHead, PO  
Box 7458, Minneapolis, MN 55407  
& Griot B. Deller, PO Box 10563,  
Columbus, OH 43201)

**HOW TO GUIDE ON STARTING  
A D.I.Y. EVENTS CALENDER, A**,  
\$?, 4¼" x 7", printed, 20 pgs.  
This is exactly what the title describes.  
The examples of calendars inside are  
inspiringly great, and the guide itself  
is exactly helpful and what it needs  
to be. Well-formatted, well printed,  
well looking, well done. —Andrew  
Flanagan (dearleanne@gmail.com)

**JUST A MAN** #1, \$1,  
3½" x 2", printed, 56 pgs.  
A bizarre Wild West one-act, this  
is a thinly explained revenge story.  
The art is moody enough to carry it  
through, however, and the sparse  
landscapes frame the story nicely.  
—Andrew Flanagan (Silber, PO Box  
18062, Raleigh, NC 27619)

**LIFE ON THE SERENGHETTO**  
#7, 3¼" x 4½", quarter-size, cardstock  
cover, photocopied, 14 pgs.  
Some pieces on dad's injuries,  
working in a tackle shop, and

some experiences with friends  
met in small-town Japan. Not bad,  
but a quick read. —Craven Rock  
(lifeontheserenghetto@gmail.com)

**LIKES**, 4¼" x 11",  
photocopied, 20 pgs.  
Each page of this zine is a list of  
the writer's likes or dislikes. I'm  
a listophile myself, but, still, isn't  
this a bit arrogant, superfluous,  
and goofy? Well, for me, not  
in this case, not with this zine.  
Granted, I couldn't read it all at  
once, but in spurts it was pretty  
cool. She gets up to fifty or sixty  
items per page at times and has  
pretty deep understanding of  
what she likes or hates. She's  
in tune to it to the point that it  
comes off kind of poetic. She  
dislikes, "when friendships end  
badly, but you miss that person  
but pride or fate prevents both  
of you from beginning anew." But  
she likes "waking up on New  
Year's Day to find people still  
partying." Then in-between is  
simpler stuff. Likes: misfits and  
outcasts. Hates: whining. Worth  
picking up for those moments  
when you don't want to read  
something super heavy. —Craven  
Rock (polkaostrich@gmail.com)

**LOST KISSES** #9-10, \$1,  
3½" x 2", printed, 36 pgs.  
A tiny little thing that tells its story  
in parallel—one part narration and  
one part stick figures—and quippy  
dialogue. The author is either a  
curmudgeonly gutter Boho or a  
theory-fueled Bobo in full-tilt.  
One of the arguments always made  
for zines is their openness, their  
community, their bald reveals in  
simple language of confusing  
lives. Sometimes (frequently)  
they serve as soapboxes for bitter  
agoraphobics, bullied punks, and  
marginalized punk sympathizers.  
This is the latter. —Andrew  
Flanagan (Silber, PO Box 18062,  
Raleigh, NC 27619)



**MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL** #314, \$4 U.S. and Canada, 8½" x 11", newsprint, 164 pgs.

I really hope that, in some way, *MRR* still functions as that rad gateway into punk rock that it did with so many of us coming of age in ye olde pre-internet times. That it's not all just Myspace and shit-talking on message boards, you know? I love the fact that this zine is still around. Interviews with Coke Bust, Turboslut, Libyans, Smart Cops, and more, as well as one with Portland artist Dennis Dread. A history of Italian squats, a brilliant salvo in the

a ton of ground in the music scene, from interviews of film directors to live show reviews and music reviews. The twenty-four-track burned and mastered compilation CD that came with this zine is an all-too-worthwhile listen. My biggest problem with this zine came from the reason I picked it up in the first place: The Spits interview. The interview is humorous, but there's only attribution to *Mongrel Zine's* questions to the band. The reader has no idea what member of The Spits is answering the questions. Was it Sean, Erin, Lance, or some

#### PERFECT MIXTAPE SEGUE,

**THE** #5, offset, 4 ¼" x 7", 24 pgs.

This is a story of the illness that dogged Joe through his teens and twenties. He describes over a decade of symptoms and the Goldilocks-esque assortment of doctors that he sees. One doctor is too homeopathic and unprofessional, another is entrenched in tradition and won't listen, and the third is just right. Joe's story speaks to a few of the many problems with healthcare in the U.S.: the capitalism, and the lack of dialogue between those

like that kind of stuff usually is. It's more like talking to that one intellectual friend who you can actually stand to be around. There's a Zerzan reprint, an interview with the editor of *Paranoia*, and a bunch more. All of it has that weird fringe paranoia that you used to see more of in zines. It's as they say: "a forum for diversity of marginal viewpoints." This is what is cool about zines. I got exposed to and enjoyed reading about something that is a bit out of my field. I would never Google any of these topics on my own, but I enjoyed reading them.

## I looked at the photocopied duct tape on the cover and the gay porn collage inside and went, "Yes!"

—CT Terry  
*BLACK CARROT* #13

letters section by Tommy Strange about the questionable tactic of *MRR* reprinting straight news sources for its Iraq war coverage, and more. Nice to see that twenty-five-plus years in, there's still some venom and thoughtfulness packed into those dull gray pages. —Keith Rosson (*MRR*, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760)

**MISHAP** #26, \$1 and stamp or trade, 5 ½" x 8 ½", photocopied, free to prisoners, 24 pgs.

In this issue, Ryan gives his take on radical teachers, tells us some dreams, and reviews some bumper stickers. He also compares two crimes, one being an elaborate threat to bomb a casino in 1980, and the other being "the old smash and grab." Most of this issue is book reviews. A good read. —Craven Rock (*Mishap*, PO Box 5841, Eugene, OR, 97405)

**MONGREL ZINE** #5, \$5, 6" x 7.5", photocopied, 120 pgs.

I saw they had a Spits interview in this so I snatched this zine right up. Lo and behold, I found a treasure trove of fresh music and a newfound interest in the Montreal garage rock scene. In this issue, editors Janelle Pramberg and Bob Scott do a good job of praising their heroes, such as King Khan and B-Lines, who hail from Canada. I find it interesting how different scenes appreciate different aspects of art around music. In this issue, *Mongrel* includes interviews with some damn fine music poster artists such as Rupert Bottenberg and CM Ruiz. This zine is great for covering

really high paid spokesperson? Well, I guess there's only one disappointment to an otherwise enjoyable fanzine. —N.L. Dewart (*mongrelzine.bigcartel.com*)

**MOSH** #10, ?\$, 6" x 8", printed, 20 pgs.

It's pretty cool to see a zine from Malaysia and all the feelings of solidarity that are presented within it. This zine is comprised almost completely of band interviews and reviews, which leaves the zine somehow lacking an identity of its own. It's interesting to note that most of the reviews in here are of self released CD-Rs, which really shows the DIY mentality being put into use by the artists who want to put out their music in an area where that may be the only way to go about it. I'm excited to see this zine evolve as it progresses because Nizang's love of punk rock and zines seems to explode off the pages with its uninhibited enthusiasm. —Rene Navarro (*Nizang*, 49 Jin Rahim Kajai, Tmn Tun Dr Ismael, 60000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)

#### ONT ROAD #12,

postage or trade, 8½" x 11", 40 pgs.

Even though the content was interesting and he seems like a cool dude, this struck me as boring. The tour stories, while drug-filled, fell flat, and the Caribbean vacation with the parents was an especially low point. A lovely review of the Travelpussy, however. Ultimately, he gets to do rad shit all the time and I don't, so who cares what I have to say? —Andrew Flanagan (*Ont Road*, 14 Hessele Mount, Leeds LS6 1EP, UK)

practicing natural medicine and the people who work in hospitals. He also calls out for people to have sympathy for their friends whose symptoms remain undiagnosed. Just because the doctor can't tell what's wrong doesn't mean that everything is okay. I would have liked to read more editorializing on the experience, instead of what was mainly a list of events, but there's something here for everyone who has ever had a frustrating medical problem and felt let down by their doctor. —CT Terry (Joe, 222 S. Rogers St., Bloomington, IN 47404)

#### PERPETRATION NATION #7,

5 ½" x 8 ½", photocopied, 22 pgs.

A medley zine of some interviews with bands Merkit (boring), Cobretti (boring), and Charm City Art Space (interesting), a tedious tour diary comic, and some good personal writing about listening to punk at work, the death of a friend, and dealing with Man hassles, all with a "it-came-from-Dayton" feel. Overall, worth it. But Nick of *Perpetration Nation*, don't you ever, ever, make me read print that small again! (It wasn't *all* in tiny print). —Craven Rock (Nick Anderson, 1582 Wayne Ave., Apt. 4, Dayton, OH 45410)

#### PSIONIC PLASTIC JOY \$2,

5 ½" x 8 ½", photocopied, 30 pgs.

There's a lot here. Some writing on art that pushes for "hyper-modernity" (as opposed to post-modernism), and then some art critique with a radical bent. Since it's in a zine, it's not miserably dry

—Craven Rock (Jason Rodgers, PO Box 1683, Nashua, NH 03060)

**SELF-AWARE** #2, \$?, 8 ½" x 11", photocopied

There is a comedian named Carlos Mencia who has a show on Comedy Central. I find his material strange because about twenty percent of it includes him telling the audience how politically incorrect he is and the fact that some people may not approve of this. The guy in *Self-Aware* also does this. I never really understood why people do this. If you're using terms like "retard" and "bitch" then the audience has probably already pegged you as un-PC. This zine is mostly a tour diary, a few interviews (Hirax Max, Weekend Nachos), and few record reviews. I'd also like to mention that this guy's (now-defunct) band, Obstruction, is very good. I checked 'em out on the internet while reading this. —Will Kwiatkowski (*jrobbins85@gmail.com*)

**SIC BOI** #3, postage, 8½" x 11", Xeroxed, 18 pgs.

So, first things first: a jailzine... with an interview with a member of The Dwarves? What? With the main work being his long essay on justice—which is more of a play-by-play of his jailing—the rest of the zine is somewhat indecipherable. Also, I can't ignore the fact that this guy sent a fucking batshit crazy letter to *Razorcake*, saying the "bitch" who reviewed him was mean...it was easily the best part of receiving this zine for review. Well done!

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—Andrew Flanagan (Randy Johnson, F-22545, PO Box 2500, Susanville, CA 96127)

Manchester. This seems to be a pretty active entity there, as it also puts on shows, podcasts, and releases records. It's very similar

shitty. She doesn't need any help with the art, however. It's really bad.  
—Andrew Flanagan (Silber, PO Box 18062, Raleigh, NC 27619)

up about. That enthusiasm is infectious. That enthusiasm gives depth to what I previously thought of as millionaire dudes standing in

## Ultimately, he gets to do rad shit all the time and I don't, so who cares what I have to say?

—Adrew Flanagan  
ONT ROAD #12

**SQUID PRO QUO #1**, \$2,  
8 1/2" x 5 1/2", photocopied, 14 pgs.  
Basic but well put together zine by Jason of The Kobanes. Articles and reviews of bands like The Smoking Popes, The Methadones, and Shot Baker. Plus I guess Mike Bryne of The Methadones will be writing a guest column now and again. First topic is "Meatheads" and is thoroughly enjoyable. Now get back to work on the *Out of Focus*, Vol. 2 DVD, Mike! Good stuff by Jason. Looks like the next issue features a comp CD. So why would you miss it if you can get it for less than a can of Spaghetti-O's? —Sean Koepenick (sproquo@gmail.com)

**TNS #5**, free,  
5 1/2" x 8 1/2", printed, 22 pgs.  
This is a really cool zine from

to what Razorcake does in the fact that it's a non-profit DIY label that promotes local activity of interest to its fans. Reading this made me want to be there and catch all the upcoming shows being advertised. This succeeds at creating a window into a scene I would have otherwise never been aware of, which is something I enjoy in a zine. Very well put together and a steady, enjoyable read. —Rene Navarro (thatsnotskanking@hotmail.com)

**WORMS #4**, \$1,  
3 1/2" x 2", printed, 39 pgs.  
As this is a serial, and I started at #4, I had no clue what was going on. From what I could tell, some girl has been abducted by powerful conspirators who want to make her life really

**XO #5**, \$1,  
3 1/2" x 2", printed, 44 pgs.  
Little dealer and dealer friend get a brother killed through bad art, or confusing plot, or accidental car hood face smash? You decide!  
—Andrew Flanagan (Silber, PO Box 18062, Raleigh, NC 27619)

**ZISK #18**, \$2, 7" x 8 1/2",  
photocopied, 24 pgs.  
*Zisk*, celebrating its ten-year anniversary, is coming from a place that I wish more zines were coming from: unadulterated, knowledgeable enthusiasm. I don't mind in the slightest that I'm an extremely passive noticer of baseball and that *Zisk* is a baseball zine for this reason alone: *Zisk* is that smart, funny friend who can't help themselves in sharing what they're so geeked

well-groomed fields mainly spitting and adjusting their cups into me wanting to see Pablo "The Panda" Sandoval play, revealing the story behind a player being nicknamed "Le Grand Orange," how to play "Moundies," and the complexity of either loving or hating a player like Alex Rodriguez. So, if you ever wanted to sit next to a group of folks while they reveal the slow-moving magic of baseball, *Zisk* is your two-dollar ticket to that friendship. —Todd (801 Eagles Ridge Rd., Brewster, NY 10509)



Hundreds more zine reviews can be found at [www.razorcake.org](http://www.razorcake.org)

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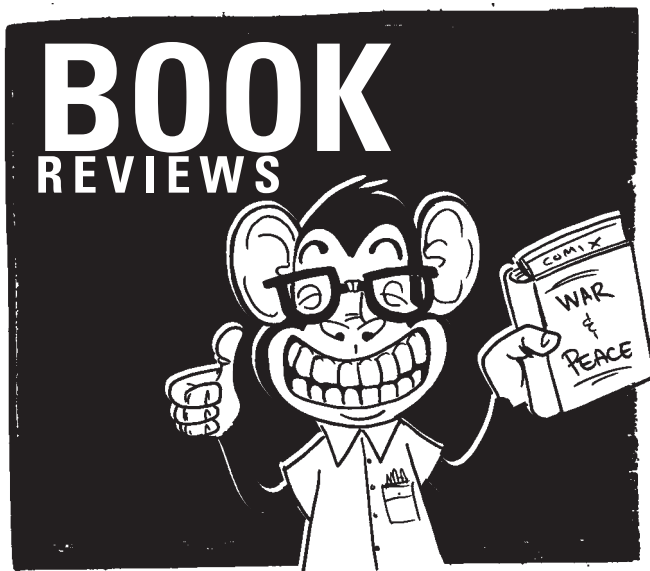
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### Arcade of Cruelty, The

By Joseph Larkin, 264 pgs.

Wow. I can't think of many other times when I have received something to review that's rankled me as much as *The Arcade of Cruelty*. To call it misogynistic, racist, and homophobic wouldn't be an overstatement. Neither would it be incorrect to call it just plain boring and baffling. And I don't say that just because of the use of the n-word or c-word (hey, there might be kids reading this). The vast majority of this just isn't funny.

But I digress. *The Arcade of Cruelty* is a thick, wonderfully bound and laid out book of black and white comics by Joseph Larkin. The material is presented as a retrospective of his work, with the idea being he is dead, even though he's not. It starts with a look at his earlier works, which primarily consist of manipulations he's made to what I assume are his class pictures

it is. The only section that even made me laugh slightly was the one titled "Always Never Forgetting," featuring many satirical comics regarding the post-9/11 period.

In the end I was and still am very confused. This is so well laid out and the quality of the paper stock and cover could easily challenge any other comic anthology out there, but the constant self-deprecation and sexist (not to mention homophobic and racist) content ruins any chance this might have of being redeeming. Is all of it supposed to be a joke, as in, "I don't really mean it. I'm making fun of other people and that's why it's funny." Or does Larkin really have problems with these people? I know not all comics necessarily have to be funny and the ones that are obviously not meant to be are sometimes the more intriguing ones in *The Arcade of Cruelty*. Too many unanswered questions and pointless drawings make this seem as though it's almost more about psychology and not comics. Either way, it certainly wasn't worth my time. And it's certainly not worth anyone else's, either. —Kurt Morris (Also-Ran Comics, [www.also-ran.com](http://www.also-ran.com))

### Disposable Skateboard Bible, The

By Sean Cliver, 367 pgs.

A few years ago, I wrote a review in these very pages about a book called *Disposable: A History of Skateboard Art* by Sean Cliver. I claimed it was the ultimate chronicle of the world of art in skateboarding. I stood by that until now.

Cliver ended up making a few additions to his first book and realized there was a lot more to the story than what he included in his first book. He decided to follow it up with the fuckin' bible! Seriously, this almost 400-page, hardbound tome has an extremely biblical feel to it. It even has the little red ribbon bookmark in the binding! What is more important is the content: so many pictures of boards from the '50s right up until the '00s and many more anecdotes from the pro skaters, artists, shapers, and every other industry insider. Cliver himself lays out the story of skateboard collecting and the disease it can become (as I can attest to you first hand). He goes the extra mile with sections on rare prototypes and actual pros' rides leaving me literally drooling.

For me, looking at the artwork on these skateboards instantly transports me to a place in my own history. I see pictures of boards and the memories

Shit, man, I shouldn't have to think so much  
to figure out if something is funny or not.

and elementary school yearbooks. It moves on to do the same with high school yearbooks and then includes drawings Larkin made in school. Remember when you used to do the same thing? Well, they look about the same and are just as unfunny as you'd expect them to be all these years after the fact. The consistent layout of each page is to have the title of the piece, the year it was drawn, and a brief comment made off to the side of each piece of work.

The book is broken down into multiple sections like this, each with a different focus and a title page wherein there is a brief overview of the collection. I actually really liked the more abstract stuff in the "Everything Else Is a Pale Ghost" section. The next section, comprised of tons of comic strips, shows a slight improvement in the drawing abilities of Larkin but still aren't very funny. So many of the comments with the comics are so self-deprecating in their nature that it makes me wonder what the hell is going on. Does Larkin think that consistent use of put-downs of himself is funny? Or does he seriously believe that his work sucks? If that's the case, why include it in a book? And if there's so much of it in the book, why put out the book at all? Or is the whole thing a big mind-fuck to begin with? Like, "Oh, if I'm self-deprecating they won't find it funny and that's what's funny about it!" Shit, man, I shouldn't have to think so much to figure out if something is funny or not.

An example of one of Larkin's comics is entitled "Joseph Larkin's Snappy Comebacks to Women." It shows a drawing of what I assume to be him with three word balloons that say: "Is it that time of the month AGAIN?!" "I hope you get cervical cancer and die from it," and "Shut up, Bitch." Hilarious, right? Or not. The next section jumps to some monotype prints Larkin made in art school, followed by some collages and both are actually pretty good. I could go on and on, but by now you probably get the idea. I will say that there is a section called "The Unbearable Lightness of Being Raped," which is as un-funny and offensive as you might guess

come flooding back: the boards I used to ride, the ones my best friends rode, the one that cute girl used to ride, the one that the police confiscated, the one I swung like a club to get out of a bad situation. Sean Cliver has managed to stir some of the best memories of my life up and, for that, I've gotta thank him. If you skate or have ever skated, *you must have this!* —Ty Stranglehold (Ginko Press 1321 Fifth St., Berkeley, CA 94710)

### Everybody Talks About The Weather... We Don't (The Writings of Ulrike Meinhof)

Edited, with introduction by Karin Bauer, 268 pgs

On May 14, 1970 a well-known figure of the German left, and respected journalist, Ulrike Meinhof, and others broke Andreas Baader (imprisoned for driving without a driver's license) out of jail. This action laid the groundwork for what became the Red Army Faction (RAF), also known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang, which was labeled a terrorist group. They described themselves as an "armed resistance group." They operated in West Germany during the early 1970s. Shortly after the jail break, on June 5<sup>th</sup> of the same year, they released their first communiqué to the public in the leftist Berlin paper, *Agit 833*, titled "Build Up the Red Army!" From there, they would seal their place in history with bombings and kidnapping the wealthy. Romanticized by the punk movement since forever, one may wonder who exactly were the RAF, and what were they about? This book is a good place to start, and this is the first time this has been printed in English.

This book collects Meinhof's columns for the communist paper *Konkret*, which ran from 1960 to 1969. Each column is annotated at the end with information and background to political figures and the surrounding events of the time, which makes this all the more interesting. The writing is fiery—emotional at times—but also well informed. The Radical Left was not only alive in America at the time, but all over the world. Through these




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columns, one gets a picture of why people in West Germany were protesting, as well as what led Meinhof to do what she later did. The biographical chapter, "In Search of Ulrike Meinhof" from Karin Bauer, makes this book the best reason to pick this up. She gives us the history of before and after, examining the results of what the RAF did, how the populace reacted, what impact going underground had on Meinhof's personal life, and more. This is an interesting, informative, and thought-provoking read. —M.Avr (Seven Stories Press, 140 Watts St., NY, NY 10013, [www.sevenstoriespress.com](http://www.sevenstoriespress.com))

## Wrong

By Chris Walter, 238 pgs.

You would think I was Chris Walter's publicist or something by how often I seem to review his books. Well, truth be told, I do know Chris, but I've been a fan of his writing a lot longer than we've known each other.

That out of the way, on to Walter's latest novel, *Wrong*. It is the latest story in the ongoing tales of the Downtown East Side of Vancouver BC. With this book, Walter has stepped up both his writing and storytelling skills (not that there was anything wrong with them before). I was glued to this book. Aging punk rocker Dill returns (he

was in *East Van* and *Boozecan*), maintaining his life as a drug-addled minor celebrity in the ghettos of East Van. Fired up by the gentrification of the city put into motion by the impending Olympics (a very real situation in the DTES right now), Dill decides to take action and a chain reaction of events unfolds.

The thing that really gets me with this book is the characters. There are so many people populating this story and they are so real. I feel like I've seen them and met them. Perhaps part of that is because I have spent time in East Vancouver, but I think it has more to do with Walter's portrayal of them. They live and breathe through his words. The main characters all have interlinked histories—whether they know it or not—and the story weaves through the back alleys of the city at a good pace.

In the end, you are not only treated to a great story about punk rockers, but you are given a great deal of insight into the problems of the homeless and addicted in what has been described as the worst drug ghetto in North America. Boo, Olympics! —Ty Stranglehold (GFY Press, #34-2320 Woodland Dr., Vancouver BC Canada V5N 3P2, [punkbooks.com](http://punkbooks.com))

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## Brotherhood: The Oppressed/The Prowlers: DVD

Two anti-fascist oi bands that I'm not familiar with take on Toronto's 360 Club for one show. After a run through, I like both of their titular, gruff, proud outfits (and I typically have no interest in oi). Headlining act, The Oppressed (England), takes up the lion's share of performance time on the disc (twenty tracks) and spends it delivering throaty yells and rugged riffs. The best bits come from covers: "Boots for Stompin'" is a tongue-in-cheek send-up of Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots Are Made for Walkin,'" and seeing a sweaty, uncomfortably packed-in audience mouth the chorus to first wave ska standard "Skinhead Girl" is enjoyable. Openers, The Prowlers (Montreal), use their thirteen songs to provide punchy, bilingual chants. In terms of presentation, the picture is clear, the audio is decent quality—not great but fine for this sort of small concert—and the idea of combining two performances into one DVD is a brilliant one. If you dig oi, give this a viewing. —Reyan Ali (Up the Punx Video)

## NOFX: Backstage Passport: DVD

NOFX seems like a band that has handled its minor celebrity pretty well. This documentary follows them as they travel across the globe, attempting to play spots they (nor any other band) have ever played before. It is a compilation of six episodes on one disc, along with a bonus disc containing about twenty extra minutes per episode (where all the good stuff is). It is very entertaining to watch, though not always comfortable or agreeable. It is a basic made-to-be-televized twenty-two-minute show, complete with censored obscenities (even on the DVD?), a theme song... even a shitty, cheesy title (for a band that named one of their albums *Heavy Petting Zoo*, they can do better than *Backstage Passport*).

They travel to South America, Asia, and Africa. The more obscure/dangerous the situation, the better. They almost always draw a huge crowd, rarely get paid, and create their own good times any way they can along the way. There's a lot of frustration with foreign cultures, some occasional annoying attitudes (from both the band and locals), but, largely, they seem excited and appreciative to be playing small places and still packing venues.

Kent, their manager, often gets very drunk and entertaining on camera. (The bonus footage, which was much better than the stuff edited into episodes, provides a little more background into his problems with drinking, and it ends up a lot less humorous than the stuff edited for TV). I found Kent and Smelly to be by far the most interesting members of the group, and both of them probably get more screen time than any other member of the group (or at least deserve it).

There are corny dramatic moments (and genuine ones as well). There are times when you cringe with discomfort at their actions. The constant NOFX music in the background was extremely annoying. In the end, however, it was fun to watch, and offers an interesting look into how the band functions while walking that funny, awkward line between obscurity and celebrity. They obviously appreciate what they have and love the way they're living. *Backstage Passport* demonstrates it well. There are lots of drugs, lots of mayhem, lots of lousy promoters, and lots of entertainment crammed onto these two discs. —Will Kwiatkowski (Fat, PO Box 193690, SF, CA 94119-3690)

## Pansy Division: Life in a Gay Rock Band: DVD

I was fifteen when I first saw Pansy Division. It was a time in my life defined mostly by complete and total disdain for almost everyone I knew. I went to an all-girls Catholic high school and would scrawl leftist political slogans into my locker just to annoy people. Ah, high school punk rock! But when I saw Pansy Division, I was blown away. These guys had stickers on their guitars saying "cocksucker" and "sexual anarchist!" The audience, which was there to see Green Day, just stood there, jaws open, not sure of a.) what to make of this, and b.) how they should construct their response, so as to seem not homophobic, but definitely NOT seem gay, either. It was amazing!

My sister and I immediately bought all of their records! We listened to them constantly! I think that, had my mom gone through our records (which she had absolutely no desire to do), the lyrics to "Groovy Underwear" would've been more shocking to her than the entire Alternative Tentacles catalog (with the possible exception of "Will the Fetus Be Aborted?"). "Tight briefs on your sexy butt/White fabric surrounding your nuts/Bike shorts put it on display/You're wearing it to the left today."

Despite touring with Green Day, and having records on Lookout, Pansy Division never reached the level of popularity of many pop punk bands. Some of it was pretty basic. The band swung to the "pop" end of the pop punk spectrum, and sometimes the results weren't pretty.

But I think too many people wrote them off because they thought they were, basically, a joke band. People didn't realize that writing explicit songs

about gay sex in the early 1990s, no matter how ridiculously pun-ridden, was very different from, say, the Spinal Tap album.

And that's a shame because they've actually written some pop punk gems, like "Homo Christmas" ("Don't be miserable, like Morrissey, let me do you underneath the Christmas tree.") and "I Really Wanted You" (just a really cute, sweet song about a secret crush getting married).

When you're fifteen, it's hard to appreciate the historical significance of "Fem in a Black Leather Jacket," but looking back on it now, it seems crazy that mainstream teenagers, who went to a Green Day show, were subjected to thirty minutes of songs about gay sex. Whenever I think about it, it makes me happy.

Unfortunately, this documentary, (and the new book by Pansy Division's singer Jon Ginoli) aren't great. There's some decent live footage, and we get the basic history of the band, and a few anecdotes, but that's about it.

There's also a strange obsession with documenting how many different drummers they had. I mean, we could be spending our time talking about the song "Dick of Death," and instead we're talking band logistics! Annoying!

But these are minor details. If the sudden onslaught of all things Pansy Division (film, book, new album, national tour) leads a few more people to appreciate the first sexually explicit gay punk band, then I lend them my support!

If you've never heard them, I'd recommend starting out with the CD compilation *The Essential Pansy Division* and working your way back from there. Or, send me three bucks and I'll make you a mix tape! —Maddy (Alternative Tentacles)

#### ***Vinyl Scrapyard*: DVD**

First of all, let me just say that I was psyched to see Al Budd in this video. Here's a guy I used to see with some regularity, considering he's been working at Smash! record store in DC for probably going on twenty plus years, but, who I obviously have not seen lately, given that I don't live in DC anymore. That was an unexpected delight. We are not great pals or anything like that, but through the years he's always been very nice, not only at Smash!, but also when bartending at the Black Cat. So that was pretty cool.

The DVD itself—a short documentary about "the decline of the independent record store told through the opinions and anecdotes of the

clerks who run them"—was a little messed up in the beginning. There were a few parts where it skipped and/or froze up. There was occasionally a high-pitched whistling sound and some scratchiness. And, sometimes, the people sounded like they were talking underwater. That seemed to clear up as the DVD went on, but should probably be checked out before sending out additional copies.

I was interested in this DVD, especially because a number of the record store folks they talked to and record stores they showed were from DC, but I was still left with a couple of questions and comments. One thing I would have liked to see was where the people they were talking to were from (while they were talking to them)—the names of the record stores, at least, and the city or town. Also, I thought some of the comments being made by the people in the video could have had more context. At one point, one of the guys was talking about 120 Connie Francis records being sold for \$9,000, and, unless I missed part of it, it was unclear what exactly he was talking about (Ebay maybe?). At another point, one of the guys said, "It's a cultural thing," but we did not get any further explanation. Which culture? What do you mean? I understand that a film about record stores could be a very long film indeed, and editing is necessary, but I thought some statements should have been expanded on.

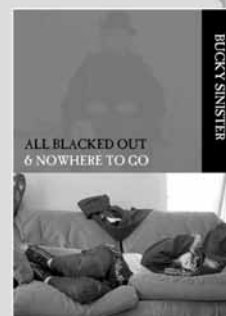
I also would have liked to hear more anecdotes. Stories about cutting out ads for sex phone lines and inserting them into straightedge record sleeves is pretty funny in my book. Complaints about customers not being very familiar with the alphabet or not knowing where the hip hop section is, even though they're standing right under the sign, are not.

Additionally, I felt some more information about what kinds of record stores the people in the film work/worked at would have been nice. I could easily assume that they're all stores that lean towards punk (and I know for a fact that at least some of them do), but that might be incorrect. Or, if it is correct, would there have been some value in including people from other genres of record stores? All in all, I'd say that I'm excited the director, Billups Allen, put this documentary together, but I didn't feel I came away with very much understanding about what the film was apparently aiming at: the decline of the independent record store. A good effort, but I think it could be improved upon with length, more detail and history, and more investigation into the subject matter. —Jennifer Federico ([www.billupsallen.com](http://www.billupsallen.com))

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